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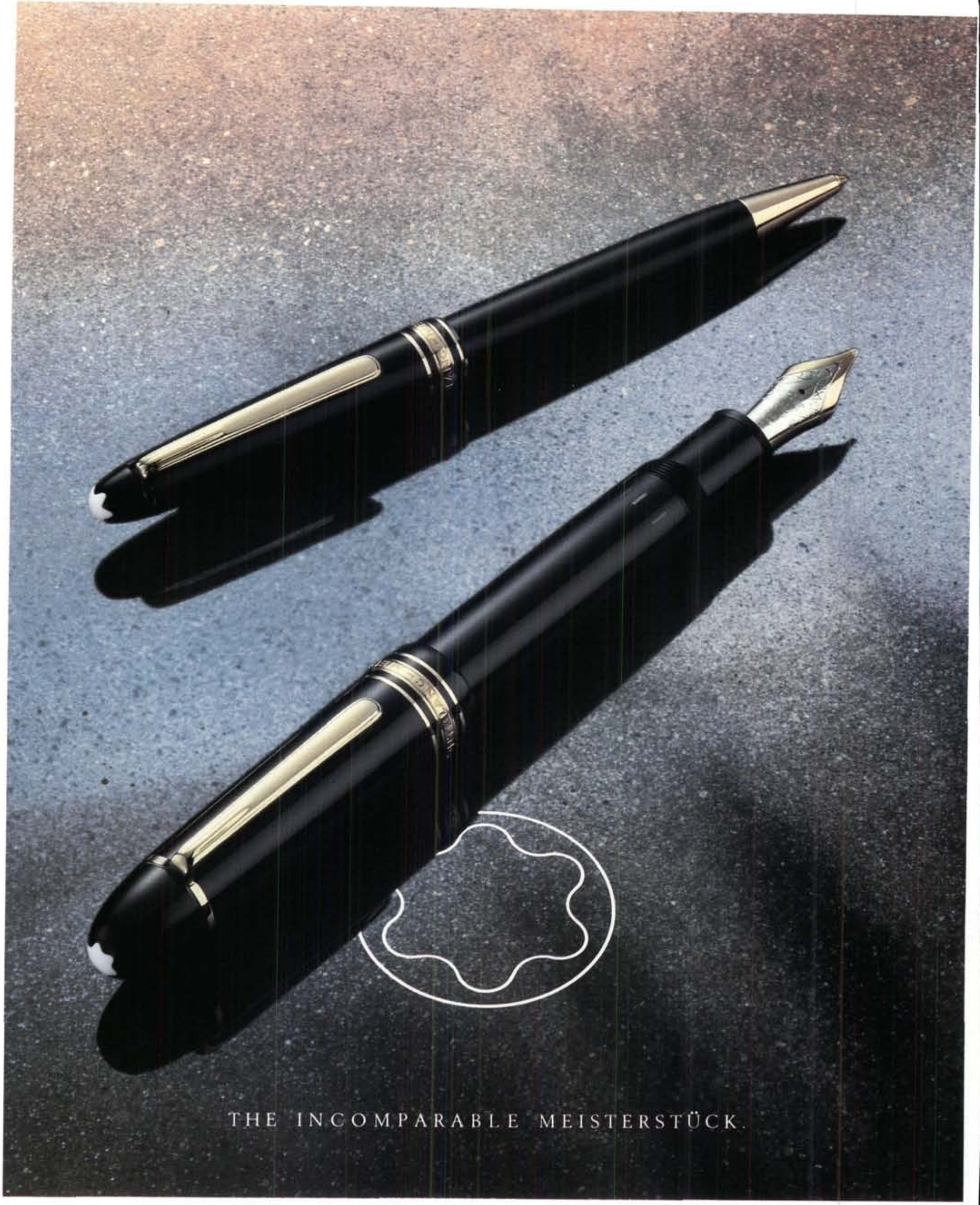
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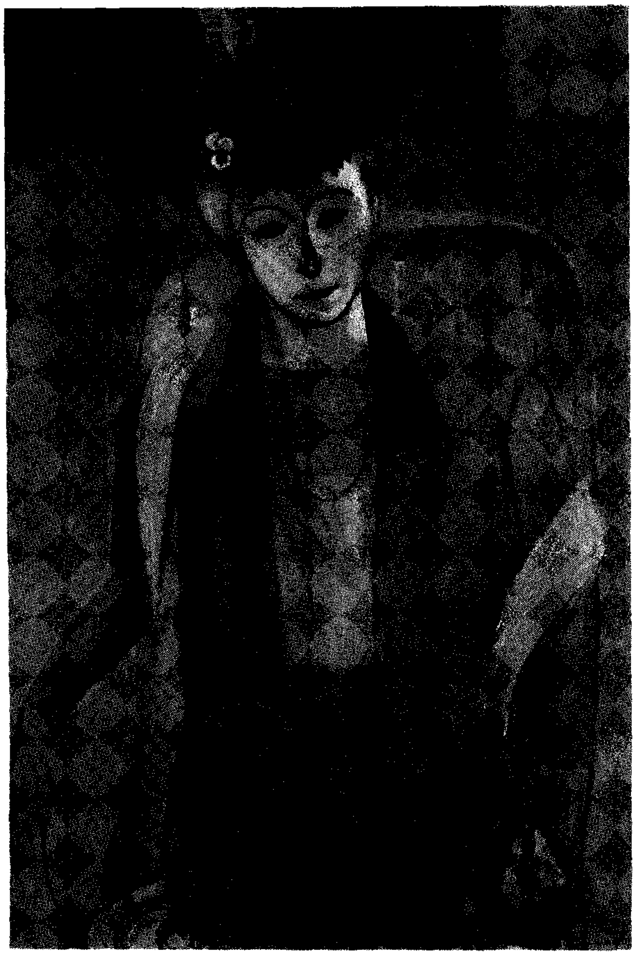

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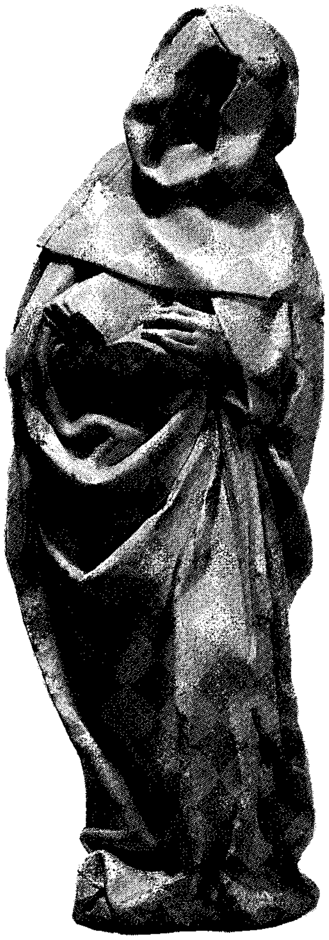

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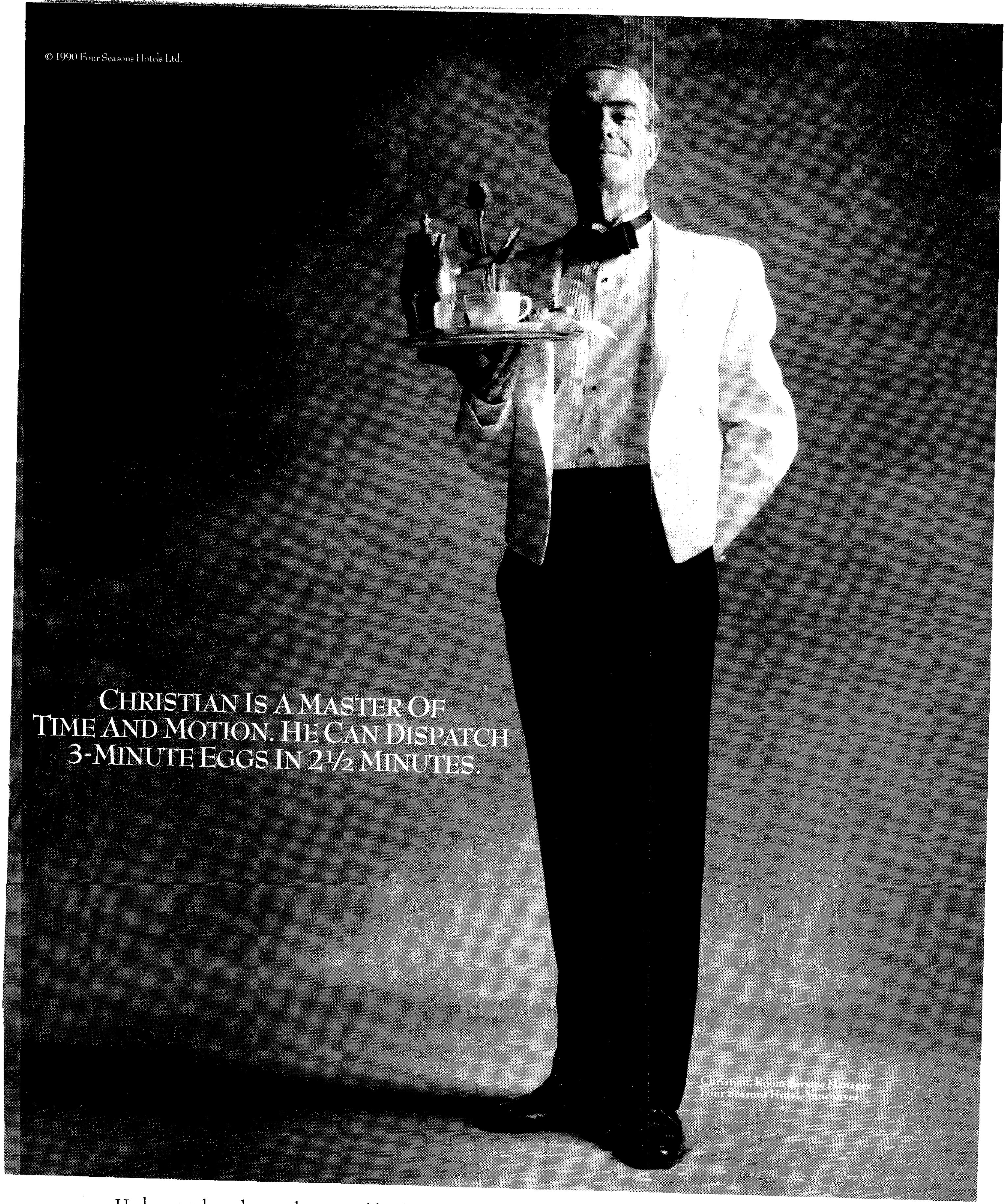
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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE

THERE'VE been some complaints about this column recently—remarks to the effect that we tend to take things too seriously. The observations are kindly—even artfully—construed so as to make it sound as though taking things seriously were a good thing. "It's wonderful," someone will say, "the way you always manage to find the moral content in everything, even if it's only a performing-dog act." But we know tact when we hear it. In an effort to lighten up, we have decided to devote this column to "Forever Plaid," the tribute to the "guy groups" of the fifties, at Steve McGraw's. Herewith a partial list of things we like about "Forever Plaid."

We like the premise of the show: a close-harmony quartet, whose lives were cut short on February 9, 1964, when their Mercury convertible collided with a school bus full of convent girls going to see the Beatles live on "The Ed Sullivan Show," is given a chance to perform for us. We like the four Plaids themselves—Jinx (Stan Chandler), Smudge (David Engel), Sparky (Jason Graae), Frankie (Guy Stroman)—and the fact that there are actually five of them. (We caught a performance where an understudy, Larry Raben, was filling in for Mr. Graae, and can vouch for the fact that there are unquestionably at least five Plaids.) We like Stuart Ross's direction, which has the Plaids performing songs like "Three Coins in the Fountain" and "Moments to Remember" at such a heightened pitch of musical good faith that only from his script and choreography would you know that the thing was a parody.

We liked the audience-participation rendition of "Heart and Soul," the calypso sequence, the work-song sequence, the way Mr. Engel makes his glasses fly off during his big solo, the way Mr. Chandler checks for a nosebleed after his, and the three-minute version of "The Ed Sullivan Show." We liked the way the pianist and musical director, James Raitt, always manages to look as though he can't believe what's going on and had nothing to do with it, and the way the script never gets soppy or sentimental even though the show's subtext is really quite moving, especially the bit where Frankie deconstructs the experience of being inside a tight chord and makes it a metaphor for life—but we were going to try to lighten up.

Most of all, we like the fact that this is a show you could take your mom to see. We took our mother Memorial Day weekend. She liked it, too, but she said she couldn't see what everybody was laughing about.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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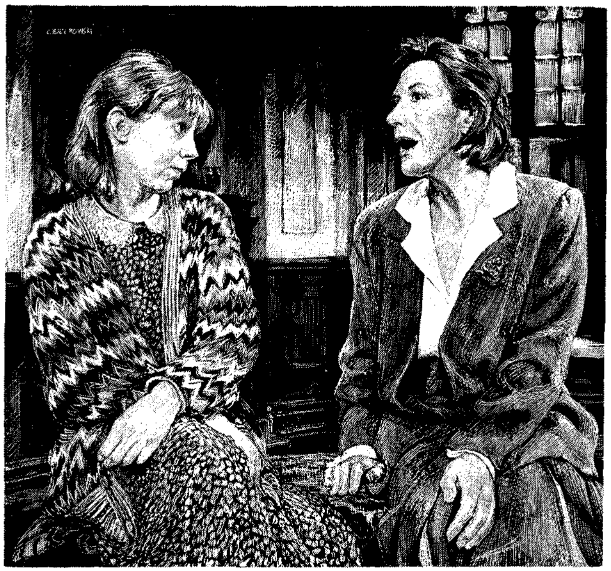
OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for schedule and ticket information.)

ELLIOT LOVES—Jules Feiffer's new play, directed by Mike Nichols. With Anthony Heald, Christine Baranski, Oliver Platt, Latanya Richardson, and David Pierce. Previews through June 6. Opens June 7 at 6:45. (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313.)



Amy Wright and Eileen Atkins in "Prin"

FALSETTOLAND—William Finn's new musical, with Michael Rupert, Stephen Bogardus, Faith Prince, and Chip Zien. Directed by James Lapine. Previews begin June 8. (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

MAIDS OF HONOR—Elizabeth McGovern, Kyra Sedgwick, and Laila Robbins portray three sisters in this play by Joan Casademont. Previews begin June 8. (WPA Theatre, 519 W. 23rd St. 206-0523.)

PHILADELPHIA, HERE I COME!—A production by the Irish Repertory Theatre of Brian Friel's 1964 play. With Pauline Flanagan, W. B. Brydon, Patrick Fitzgerald, and Ciaran O'Reilly. Previews June 6-10. Opens June 12 at 8. (South Street Theatre, 424 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

PRICE OF FAME—A play written by and starring Charles Grodin. With Lizbeth Mackay and Jeannie Berlin; directed by Gloria Muzio. Previews through June 12. Opens June 13 at 8. (Roundabout, 100 E. 17th St. 420-1883.)

PRIN—Eileen Atkins and Amy Wright in the American première of a play by Andrew Davies. John Tillinger was the director. Preview on June 5. Opens June 6 at 8. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907.)

SISTERS—A play by Marsha A. Jackson, performed by Andrea Frye and Ms. Jackson. Opens June 5 at 7. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800.)

SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION—A new play by John Guare, with Stockard Channing, Kelly Bishop, Paul McCrane, James McDaniel, and John Cunningham. Jerry Zaks has directed. In previews. (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

SWIM VISIT—A play by Wesley Moore, presented by the Primary Stages company. With Caroline Lagerfelt, Mark Metcalf, Pirie MacDonald, and Alice Haining. Previews June 7-9. Opens June 10 at 8. (45th Street Theatre, 354 W. 45th St. 333-7471.)

NEW THIS SEASON

ACCOMPLICE—This facetious thriller is one hundred per cent pure virgin plastic. Even the plentiful sight gags, which work well, cannot redeem the vacuity of the script. Rupert Holmes wrote the play, and Art Wolff directed it. (Reviewed in our issue of 5/14/90.) (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 221-1211.)

ASPECTS OF LOVE—Andrew Lloyd Webber's latest extravaganza, based on David Garnett's frail 1955 novel of the same title, aspires to good taste and sophistication (it's about artists and theatre folk rather than cats or trains) but ends up being a sort of monument to vulgarity. The combination of Garnett's triviality and Lloyd Webber's pretentiousness produces something so empty it implodes. (4/23/90) (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

BY AND FOR HAVEL—A pair of one-acters in revival. "By"—**AUDIENCE**—is based on an episode that occurred when Václav Havel had a menial job in a brewery; "for"—**CATASTROPHE**—is Samuel Beckett's poetic tribute to Havel when he was in prison. Together, they make an evening that is both comic and stirring. With Kevin O'Connor and Lou Brockway. (3/19/90) (John Houseman Studio Theatre, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038.)

CARREÑO—A show based on the life of Teresa Carreño, the Venezuelan composer, pianist, conductor, and singer. Written and performed by Pamela Ross. Directed by Gene Frankel. (Intar, 420 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

CAT ON A HOT TIN ROOF—As Maggie the Cat, Kathleen Turner seems in desperate straits in this limp and hapless revival of Tennessee Williams' most playable family melodrama. (4/2/90) (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 246-0220.)

THE CEMETERY CLUB—Eileen Heckart, Elizabeth Franz, and Doris Belack are three Jewish widows who meet each month to visit the graves of their dear departed. Ivan Menchell's play is a situation comedy, and just a bit above run-of-the-mill. The fine actresses are anything but, and John Lee Beatty's settings give the proceedings great distinction, as do Lindsay W. Davis's costumes. (5/28/90) (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 719-4099.)

CIRCLE REPERTORY COMPANY—Presenting **EACH DAY DIES WITH SLEEP,** a play by José Rivera. With Erica Gimpel, Alex Colón, and Randy Vásquez. (99 Seventh Ave. S. 924-7100. Closes June 10.)

CITY OF ANGELS—Larry Gelbart, dramatist; Cy Coleman, composer; Billy Byers, arranger; James Naughton and Gregg Edelman, leading men; and Michael Blakemore, director, are all in top form in this sharp, jokey musical satire about Hollywood in the forties. The plot concerns the making of a private-eye movie (and the unmaking of its author). The spectacular settings and costumes were designed by Robin Wagner and Florence Klotz and lighted by Paul Gallo. (12/25/89) (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 246-0102.)

CLOSER THAN EVER—This charmer amounts to an anthology of songs and sketches by Richard Maltby, Jr. (words), and David Shire (music). The fact that there is no amplification is an extra boon. (11/13/89) (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020.)

ENSEMBLE STUDIO THEATRE—The 1990 marathon of one-act plays. "Stay Away a Little Closer," by John Ford Noonan; "Death and the Maiden," by Susan Kim; "Mere Mortals," by David Ives; and "Tonight We Love," by Romulus Linney. (549 W. 52nd St. 247-3405. Closes June 17.)

A FEW GOOD MEN—"Mister Roberts" meets "The Mary Tyler Moore Show." Aaron Sorkin's military-courtroom drama treats issues such as justice, honor, loyalty, and morality with the slick, facile smugness of a half-hour comedy series, but the performances, by an ace cast under Don Scardino's direction, are wonderful. (11/27/89) (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

FOB—An excellent revival of David Henry Hwang's strong, ironic play about the encounter of two Chinese-Americans with a recent arrival. (FOB means "fresh off the boat.") A fine young actor named Dennis

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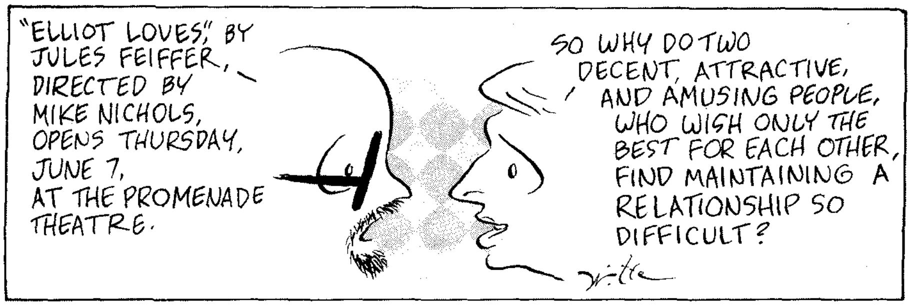
THE THEATRE—Cont'd

Dun is the newcomer, and Mr. Hwang directed. (St. Clement's, 423 W. 46th St. 245-2660. Closes June 9.)

Forever Plaid—Jason Graae, Stan Chandler, David Engel, and Guy Stroman star in Stuart Ross's musical salute to the "guy groups" of the fifties. (Steve McGraw's, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400.)

Further Mo'—A musical about the demise of black vaudeville, put together by Vernel Bagneris, the man behind 1979's "One Mo' Time." (Village Gate, 160 Bleecker St. 475-5120.)

Grand Hotel—The dazzling imagination of Tommy Tune's direction and choreography and the dazzling scenery by Tony Walton almost make up for the inner vacancy of this show (except for a glorious, eccentric dance by Michael Jeter), but not quite. The story and characters are skimpy and the music is undistinguished. Nevertheless, there isn't a boring moment. (11/27/89) (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 246-0102.)


"ELLIOT LOVES," BY JULES FEIFFER, DIRECTED BY MIKE NICHOLS, OPENS THURSDAY, JUNE 7, AT THE PROMENADE THEATRE.
SO WHY DO TWO DECENT, ATTRACTIVE, AND AMUSING PEOPLE, WHO WISH ONLY THE BEST FOR EACH OTHER, FIND MAINTAINING A RELATIONSHIP SO DIFFICULT?

Jules Feiffer and Mike Nichols

The Grapes of Wrath—This stage adaptation (by Frank Galati, who also directed) is the most truly adult version of Steinbeck's novel to date. It appeals to the mind rather than to the emotions; all the same, there's a cumulative effect. Don't go expecting to see John Ford or "Balm in Gilead," but expect to leave feeling as if you had. With Lois Smith and Gary Sinise. (4/2/90) (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

Gypsy—This revival of the great Sondheim-Styne-Laurents-Robbins musical (directed by Arthur Laurents himself) is so delightful—and the cast (led by Tyne Daly, Crista Moore, and Jonathan Hadary) so engaging—that we think anyone would be happier for having seen it. One suggestion: don't applaud when Mama Rose comes down the aisle (you'll drown out the first number). Trust Broadway; you'll have ample time to welcome Miss Daly when she mounts the steps and delivers her first onstage line. (12/4/89) (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 246-0102.)

Hannah . . . 1939—Julie Wilson stars in a new musical by Bob Merrill. Directed by Douglas Aibel. (Vineyard Theatre, 108 E. 15th St. 353-3874. Closes June 17.)

Lettice & Lovage—The marvellous Maggie Smith plays Lettice Douffet, a freewheeling guide to England's stately homes, and the elegant Margaret Tyzack plays a reprimanding envoy sent by Lettice's employers in Peter Schaffer's merry comedy about an unlikely friendship and other matters. Paxton Whitehead and Bette Henritze are effective in supporting roles. Michael Blakemore was the director. (4/9/90) (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200.)

Meet Me in St. Louis—If you like the old M-G-M musical, you probably won't like this stage version, which combines the earnest, wholesome values of the movie with an aesthetic of surpassing vulgarity. In any case, why see the show when you can rent the movie? (11/20/89) (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 246-0102.)

A Perfect Diamond—A comedy about baseball by Don Rifkin, with Michael Cullen and Josh Mostel. (Apple Corps Theatre, 336 W. 20th St. 929-3064. Closes June 17.)

The Piano Lesson—August Wilson's new drama, the fourth in his series chronicling the black-American experience in the twentieth century, is set in Pittsburgh in 1936. In its exquisite writing and over-all structure (involving the conflict over a piano that figures hauntingly and intricately in one family's history) the play resembles "Joe Turner's Come and Gone" more than "Fences." Wilson takes refuge in an overly mystical and melodramatic ending, but there are some great scenes—even if the subtle ensemble acting in Lloyd Richards' production is thrown out of balance by an excessive performance by Charles S. Dutton. (4/30/90) (Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 582-4022.)

Prelude to a Kiss—Craig Lucas's entertaining romantic comedy slips into fantasy when an old man kisses a bride at her wedding. Barnard Hughes is the old man, Mary-Louise Parker is the bride, and Timothy Hutton is the groom. (3/26/90) (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 944-9450.)

A Quiet End—A play by Robin Swados, with Lonny Price. (Theatre Off Park, 224 Waverly Pl., at 11th St. 279-4200.)

The Rothschilds—A revival of the 1970 musical by Jerry Bock (score), Sheldon Harnick (lyrics), and Sherman Yellen (book). With a sixteen-member cast, led by Mike Burstyn. Lonny Price directed. (Circle in the Square Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. 254-6330.)

Smoke on the Mountain—A gospel musical comedy conceived and directed by Alan Bailey and written by Connie Ray. With Reathel Bean and Dan Manning. (Lambs Theatre, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780.)

Some Americans Abroad—Richard Nelson's ruthlessly well-observed satire of American academics on a whirlwind theatre tour of England seems even better—and more engrossing—on a second viewing. Nathan Lane has recently joined the cast, somewhat changing the dynamics of the play; but ace acting—from Colin Stinton, Henderson Forsythe, Jane Hoffman, and Kate Burton, particularly—and ace direction (by Roger Michell) make this one a real gem. (2/26/90) (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. Closes June 17.)

Spanish Eyes—A play by Eduardo Iván López, with Edouard de Soto. Three performances a week are in English; four are in Spanish. (Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. 354-1293. Closes June 17.)

ON THE MEND

In 1968, Columbia University blasted a crater in Morningside Park near West 113th Street, intending to build a gymnasium there, and then abandoned the project after students and other neighbors protested violently. The scar in the park has finally begun to heal. Quennell Rothschild Associates, landscape architects, have converted its depths into a lily pond, complete with two spruce-studded islands, and they plan to beautify the fifty-four-foot-tall cliff along the pond's west bank by pumping a cascade of water over it. Q.R.A. is also relandscaping the rest of this end of the park, between West 110th and West 114th Streets, and they expect to finish in late June. Gardeners have already planted swaths of daffodils, myrtle, and mountain laurel at the top of the cliff, and masons have built a dramatic, hundred-and-sixty-tread staircase that connects Morningside Drive, in Columbia territory, with Morningside Avenue, in Harlem—wiping out the park's traditional function as a barrier between the two. Fittingly, the upper half of the staircase covers the path that was carved by Columbia's bulldozers more than twenty years ago.

Spunk—George C. Wolfe has adapted three short stories by Zora Neale Hurston, set in Harlem and the South, to make a gorgeous jazz-and-blues entertainment, giving them a powerful injection of his own mordant humor. Chic Street Man, singer and guitarist, wrote the dynamic score. With Ann Duquesnay (singer), and K. Todd Freeman, Reggie Montgomery, Kevin Jackson, and Danitra Vance (actors). Mr. Wolfe directed. (5/7/90) (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.)

The Tower of Evil—Kathleen Widdoes stars in a production of the 1832 historical drama "La Tour de Nesle," by Alexandre Dumas *père*. Translated from the French by Michael Feingold. (CSC, 136 E. 13th St. 677-4210. Closes June 10.)

Tru—Robert Morse gives a deeply thought-out, accomplished performance as Truman Capote—by turns funny, bitchy, ironic, and rueful—at the end of his life and his tether. The play was written and directed by Jay Presson Allen. (1/1/90) (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Zoya's Apartment—What do you get when you mix hopelessly bad acting, ham-fisted direction, synthetic-fibre costumes, and eerie soap-opera synthesizer music with Soviet satire? Whatever the result is, it's unspeakable. (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200. Closes June 17.)

LONG RUNS

BLACK AND BLUE: An evening of classic blues and jazz, conceived, designed, and directed by Claudio Segovia and Héctor Orezzoli, who created "Tango Argentino" in a similarly commemorative but far less visually opulent style. Musicians of renown have been assembled, and while Ruth Brown, Linda Hopkins, and Carrie Smith sing, a troupe of hoofers young and old give the tap-dance subculture a workout. (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 246-0102.) . . . **CATS:** Some twenty poems about cats by T. S. Eliot, set to music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A mighty spectacle about mighty little, owing its effectiveness to Trevor Nunn's direction and to John Napier's sets and costumes. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200.) . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** The longest-running long run recently celebrated its thirtieth birthday. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838.) . . . **FORBIDDEN BROADWAY 1990:** A source of continual merriment, this revue is a cluster of parodies of shows along the Great White Way. Gerard Alessandrini conceived and directed it, and wrote the witty, barbed lyrics. (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090.) . . . **THE HEIDI CHRONICLES:** Wendy Wasserstein's play looks at first glance like standard baby-boom playwriting fare, but some alchemical combination of graceful-mindedness and good writing enables her to capture, lampoon, and transcend her generation all at the same time. With Brooke Adams. (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.) . . . **JEROME ROBBINS' BROADWAY:** A collection of high spots from "On the Town," "Billion Dollar Baby," "High Button Shoes," "The King and I," "Peter Pan," "West Side Story," "Gypsy," "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum," and "Fiddler on the Roof," all of which were choreographed or directed, or both, by Jerome Robbins. (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200.) . . . **LES MISERABLES:** The stars of this musical adaptation of the Victor Hugo novel are John Napier's settings and David Hersey's lighting. (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200.) . . . **OTHER PEOPLE'S MONEY:** Jerry Sterner's comedy about a New York corporate raider's attempt to take over a decorous New England business maintains its suspense from beginning to end. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000.) . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** The much ballyhooed Andrew Lloyd Webber musical is fun—if you're not bothered by theatre that cares not a whit for words and contains not one ghost of an idea. Except for the sets, everything about the show is negligible. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

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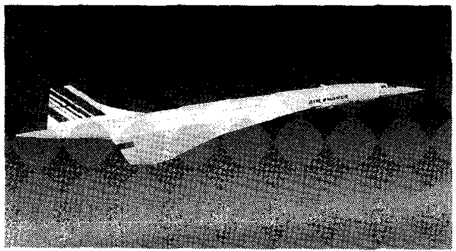

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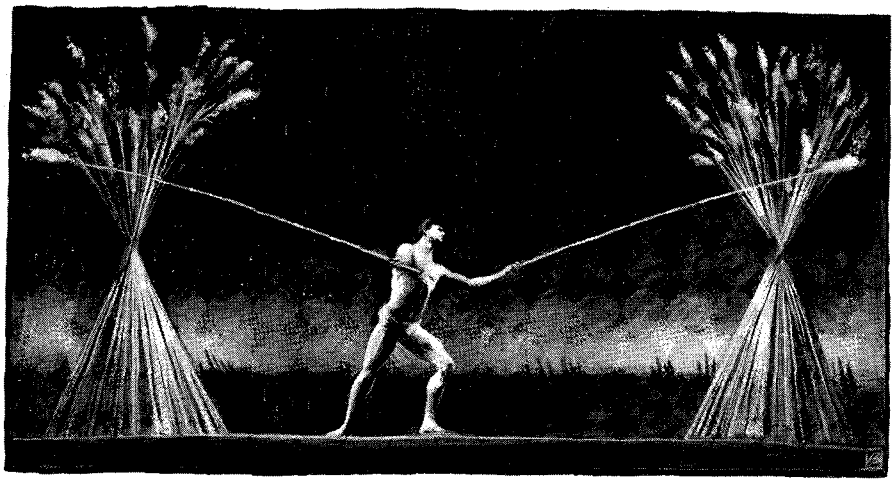

Edward Villella in "Watermill"

DANCE

On Sunday, June 17, the two-week-long Jerome Robbins festival at New York City Ballet will wind up with a special closing-night program, in which Mr. Robbins' choreography will be danced by members of the Paris Opéra Ballet and American Ballet Theatre, as well as City Ballet. If we were to design a gala for the choreographer, with all the resources of heaven and earth at our disposal, we would add a few screen surprises. They might include:

- A film of the 1950 "Jones Beach," the ballet that Mr. Robbins collaborated on with George Balanchine. The music was the Symphony No. 1 for Orchestra by Juriaan Andriessen; the costumes were swimsuits, donated by Jantzen; the setting was a Sunday by the sea; the sections of the work had subtitles such as "Rescue from Drowning," "War with Mosquitoes," and "Hot Dogs" (the finale). As Mr. Robbins described the process of choreography to Nancy Reynolds in "Repertory in Review," Balanchine would make a minute or two of choreography, then give the dancers a break. Then Mr. Robbins would run in and make another minute or two. The choreographers collaborated on dances afterward, but never again this closely.
- A film of Mr. Robbins as the title characters both in the 1950 revival of Balanchine's "Prodigal Son" and in his 1951 "Tyl Ulenspiegel," a short, largely pantomimic work set to Richard Strauss's "Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks."
- A film of a complete performance by American Ballet Theatre of Mr. Robbins' "Fancy Free," with Mr. Robbins himself in the *danzón*.
- Films of Mr. Robbins in two other Balanchine parts that he originated: the male lead in the first section of the 1949 "Bourrée Fantasque," where his partner was Tanaquil LeClercq; and one of the three danseurs in the 1952 "Caracole," the legendary antecedent of another Balanchine ballet to the same Mozart music, "Divertimento No. 15."

There is no accessible film footage of "Jones Beach" or of Mr. Robbins performing in Balanchine ballets. Some footage of him in a 1944 "Fancy Free" performance, however, can be viewed in the Dance Collection of the New York Public Library at Lincoln Center, and it reveals a brilliant moment of letting go—a sudden, swashbuckling back fall and recovery—that one hasn't seen much in recent seasons, now that this solo has become so tightly sprung. Over the Steenbeck machine where we were seated was a plaque. It commemorates the naming, three years ago this week, of the library's film and video holdings as the Jerome Robbins Archive of the Recorded Moving Image. Since 1965, Mr. Robbins has donated a percentage of his royalties from "Fiddler on the Roof" to the library's efforts to preserve dance on film. According to the plaque's inscription, the archive is Mr. Robbins' "gift to us for all time." We couldn't agree more.

New York City Ballet—Presenting a festival of Jerome Robbins ballets through June 17. June 5 at 8: "Fancy Free," "Ives, Songs," and "Fanfare." . . . ¶ June 6 at 8: "Circus Polka," "Dances at a Gathering," and "Glass Pieces." . . . ¶ June 7 at 8: "The Goldberg Variations" and "I'm Old Fashioned." . . . ¶ June 8 at 8: "Mother Goose," "In Memory of . . .," and "Piano Pieces." . . . ¶ June 9 at 2: "Interplay," "Concertino," "Afternoon of a Faun," "Antique Epigraphs," and "The Concert." . . . ¶ June 9 at 8: "Mother Goose," "In Memory of . . .," and "Piano Pieces." . . . ¶ June 10 at 1: "Circus Polka," "Dances at a Gathering," and "Glass Pieces." . . . ¶ June 10 at 7: "The Goldberg Variations" and "I'm Old Fashioned." . . . ¶ June 12 at 8: "Watermill" and "The Four Seasons." . . . ¶ June 13 at 8: "In G Major," "Moves," "Other Dances," and "Brahms/Handel." (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. The season continues through July 1.)

American Ballet Theatre—June 4-5 at 8 and June 6 at 2 and 8: "Romeo and Juliet." . . . ¶ June 7 at 8: "La Bayadère (Act II)," "Brief Fling," and "Stravinsky Violin Concerto." . . . ¶ June 8 at 8: "Birthday Offering," "Fall River Legend," "Don Quixote Pas de Deux," and "Theme and Variations." . . . ¶ June 9 at 2: "Birthday Offering," "Brief Fling," "Stravinsky Violin Concerto." . . . ¶ June 9 at 8: "The Leaves Are Fading," "Fall River Legend," and "Theme and Variations." . . . ¶ June 11-12 at 8 and June 13 at 2 and 8: "Giselle." (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000. The season continues through June 30.)

Spanish Modern Dance Festival—"If Only I Could Love You," by Alexis Eupierre; "Masticando," by Margarita Guergué; "White Tears," by Sefa Jorques; "The Second Smile," by Olga Mesa; "Through the Night" (on June 8) and "Asiarias" (on June 9), by Nuria Olivé; and "Basso Ostinato," by Veronica Robert. (Casa de España, 314 E. 39th St. June 8-9 at 8. No tickets necessary.)

NIGHT LIFE

We just got off the phone with Zachary Richard, the singer-accordionist whose major-label début, "Women in the Room," was released two weeks ago and who is currently at Tramps persuading New Yorkers to do things they never thought they'd do, such as the Cajun two-step. Richard lives in an unpainted, tin-roofed house on the Acadian prairie, about ten miles west of Lafayette, Louisiana. His parents, he told us, lived on the same farm, as did his grandparents and his great-grandparents—and so on, back to 1763. Richard, who'll be at Tramps through June 9, gave us a pretty detailed oral history of the Cajun people in general, and of Cajun musicians in particular. "On Monday morning, a musician might have gone into a bank and been rejected for a loan, because musicians were supposedly irresponsible," he said. "But on Saturday night that same goddam banker would be out there shakin' a leg. People needed musicians because they needed to dance."

Before investigating his Cajun musical roots, Richard was something of a pop star in Canada and France. His image—and his music—ended up being a little too polished for his own tastes, so he began dipping into zydeco, New Orleans R. & B., and African music. His audience, in Paris especially, didn't approve. "We'd go over there and play with bass and drums," Richard told us, "and the French folkies would get real upset." If it counts for anything, *we* approve of Richard's career change quite strongly. "Women in the Room" includes music as whimsical as Lyle Lovett's and as wistful as Daniel Lanois's. One particularly acute song—written from the point of view of Richard's father—is about the days when Cajun culture was first suppressed and, as the singer explained it, "teachers literally beat the French out of the kids." Along with a few quiet moments, the album has its rock and roll and its joyous zydeco stomping. "Out here on the prairie," Richard assured us, "music and dance never got divorced."

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

Algonquin Hotel, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—**MARGARET WHITING,** whose father, Richard Whiting, wrote a string of fine pop numbers in the twenties, is currently in residence at the Oak Room. Ms. Whiting's biggest hit, "A Tree in a Meadow," appeared back in 1948, but her voice doesn't sound much worse for wear since the day Johnny Mercer told her, "You sing like a trumpet." Her shows continue to be funny, chatty, and uplifting. Shows Tuesdays through Thursdays at nine-fifteen, and Fridays and Saturdays at nine-fifteen and eleven-fifteen. Dining.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—A glitzy, color-coördinated jazz house, designed for maximum seating efficiency, where blue-suspendered waitresses sweep by your table bearing shrimp cocktails, champagne, and other trappings of the good life. After the show, out-of-towners flock to the upstairs souvenir shop, where, at last check, Blue Note golf balls were still avail-

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NIGHT LIFE—Cont'd

able. Tenor saxophonist **MICHAEL BRECKER'S** band holds forth June 5-10. Powerhouse drummer and onetime John Coltrane associate **ELVIN JONES,** who often makes loud guttural noises while walloping a cymbal or cracking a snare-drum accent, begins a stay (with a quartet) on June 12. Music from nine. Dining.

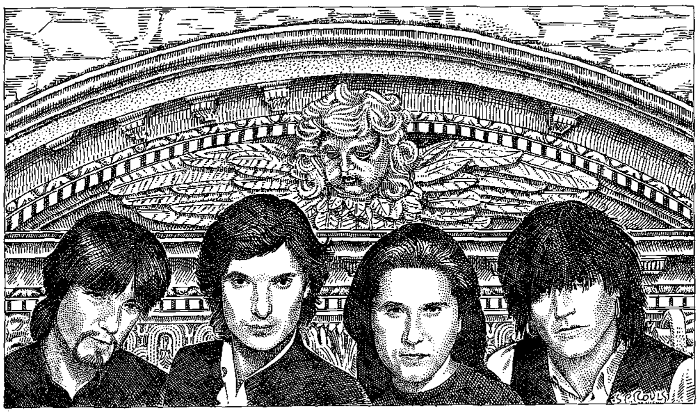
BOTTOM LINE, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—A big, pleasant room where they pack them in until someone says uncle. **JULIA FORDHAM,** a smooth-voiced British pop singer with the range of a slide-whistle, who recently put out an album titled "Porcelain," will perform on June 4. **CARMEN MC RAE** and **ROY HARGROVE** appear on June 13. Ms. McRae, an expressive jazz and scat singer, recently put out a recording of Thelonius Monk tunes that have had lyrics set to them; Mr. Hargrove is a young trumpeter who is right up at the front of the neo-traditional-jazz pack. Other highlights: **BUSTER POINDEXTER & THE BANSHEES OF BLUE** on June 7; **TAJ MAHAL** on June 8; and comedians **PAT COOPER** and **RICHARD BELZER** on June 9. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at eight and eleven, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty. Burgers, fries, and other things to make your heart beat faster.

BRADLEY'S, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A neighborhood bar where, if your neighbors coöperate, you can hear the beautiful, singular sound of musicians thinking. A trio led by saxophonist **SONNY FORTUNE** is in action June 4-9. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

CARLYLE HOTEL, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The pastel uptown spa known as the Café Carlyle is home to **BOBBY SHORT** Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty. . . . ¶ Across the hall, in the Bemelmans Bar, **BARBARA CARROLL** presides at the piano from nine-forty-five Tuesdays through Saturdays.

CAT CLUB, 76 E. 13th St. (505-0090)—Every Sunday night, this club, usually dominated by heavy-metal acts, is ceded to a gang of Lindy Hop enthusiasts called the New York Swing Dance Society. The Ronnie Cole orchestra holds sway on June 10. Music from eight to midnight.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—In the late seventies and early eighties, this dark cave (graffitied walls, a battered pool table, rest rooms for the intrepid only) was the hub of a thriving punk-music scene. Local rock has since diminished, but while other clubs of the era have fizzled, CB's perseveres, and young hopefuls continue to fill the stage nightly. **DEL AMITRI,** who will be playing here June 5, is a Scottish rock band that could easily be mistaken for an American band. After a three-year absence, they recently released a good, solid second record, "Waking Hours," and scored something of a hit with the single "Kiss This Thing Goodbye." Music from nine-thirty Sundays through Thursdays and from ten-thirty on Fridays and Saturdays.


At the Ritz, the Church

CONDON'S, 117 E. 15th St. (254-0960)—In the shadow of the Zeckendorf Towers sits this low-ceilinged, stucco-walled grotto, whose intimate scale makes it a fine spot for jazz. **ROY HAYNES,** a drummer who has been prominent on the jazz scene since his days as a Charlie Parker *intime,* propels a quartet June 5-10. Pianist and composer **RANDY WESTON,** whose influences include Monk, Ellington, and traditional African music, brings in a trio starting June 12. Music after ten.

FAT TUESDAY'S, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—If submarines had jazz clubs, they might look like this basement haunt, which is reached by passing through a tight corridor where you half expect to bump into Admiral Nimitz. This is not the place for those with a fear of intimacy: at the front tables you can go eye to eye with the performers, and no matter where you're seated there's not much room to practice your T'ai Chi. Pianist, composer, and Bud Powell devotee **TOSHIKO AKIYOSHI** leads her jazz orchestra here June 5-10. As always, her chief soloist is her husband, the fine saxophonist Lew Tabackin. **SCOTT HAMILTON,** a young sax player whose big, breathy sound has reminded some listeners of swing-era great Ben Webster, starts up with a quintet on June 12. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **LES PAUL,** the Thomas Edison of reverb, leads a trio. Music from eight. Dining.

FORTUNE GARDEN PAVILION, 209 E. 49th St. (753-0101)—Chinese food served in a greenhouse setting. Through the glass roof, which supports a jungle of potted greenery, you can admire the fruits of the midtown real-estate boom and, when available, the moon. A Steinway grand is encamped in the middle of the room, making things tricky for the waiters but improving the over-all quality of life. **BUCKY** and **JOHN PIZZARELLI** are here, with their seven-string guitars, June 5-10; bassist **JAY LEONHART** and pianist **LEE MUSIKER** begin a run on June 12. Music from eight Mondays through Saturdays, and from seven on Sundays.

LONE STAR ROADHOUSE, 240 W. 52nd St. (245-2950)—A cheery, climate-controlled restaurant and bar featuring a load of snazzy Gibson guitars, some Washington Square-style portraits of folks like Bo Diddley and Dr. John, and funky French fry-potato chip hybrids. A bleary-eyed patron here was recently heard remarking, "I don't know about you people, but I'm feeling a lot of love in this room." The **SPANIC BOYS,** who recently appeared with host Andrew Dice Clay on "Saturday Night Live" (in the stead of conscientious objector Sinéad O'Connor), will be here June 5. **C. J. CHENIER,** son of the late zydeco king Clifton Chenier, comes in with his Red Hot Louisiana Band on June 6. June 7 belongs to the harmony-heavy Australian pop outfit the **LITTLE RIVER BAND,** and **SAVOY BROWN** performs on June 10. Music after nine.

MAXWELL'S, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken. (1-201 798-4064)—A good sound system, cheap drinks, and a regular-guy atmosphere make this restaurant-bar, home of the Hoboken Sound and of the phrase "jangly guitars," a popular hangout for musicians and their followers. Manhattanites who stay through the the second set will need all their Scout training to get home, but the smell of the nearby Maxwell House factory might give them a boost. June 4 belongs to the **CHILLS,** a New Zealand band that has been around for about a decade but that has only recently come to the attention of American audiences, with its recent release, "Submarine Bells." On June 8, the Original Sins, the A Bones, the World Famous Blue Jays, and the Dragsters will be on hand. June 9 is given over to **MIRACLE LEGION,** a Connecticut guitar/garage outfit, and the **CUCUMBERS,** who were part of the first wave of Hoboken bands.

MICHAEL'S PUB, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—A mid-Manhattan pub for well-heeled gents and high-heeled ladies. **SID CAESAR** and **IMOGENE COCA** perform Tuesdays through Fridays at nine-thirty (shows June 7-8 begin at eight-forty-five) and Saturdays at nine and eleven-thirty. **JOAN RIVERS,** whose stock went up recently when Angela Bowie spilled the beans about her ex and Mick on "The Joan Rivers Show," will be doing standup June 7-8 at ten-thirty. Dining. Closed Sundays.

RAINBOW & STARS, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (632-5000)—A moondust-in-your-hair cabaret where a club soda costs about eight dollars. There are plenty of niceties if you're so inclined: an ear-popping express elevator in which you can mingle with the famous; tables scattered with plastic diamonds and sapphires; and rest-room attendants who hover near the sink asking, "Is the water too warm?" The **MC GUIRE SISTERS,** the wholesome Ohio trio who had a string of hits in the fifties, are in charge through June 9; **BETTY BUCKLEY** begins work on June 12. Shows from nine. Dining. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

RED BLAZER TOO, 349 W. 46th St. (262-3112)—A place where a fella and a gal can put on the feedbag, get a little tight, and cut a rug. When the band is swinging, and you and your dreamboat are cheek to cheek, everything can seem just swell. Mondays and Tuesdays are the property of **VINCE GIORDANO AND THE NIGHTHAWKS,** a band that looks and sounds exactly like a thirties swing outfit. Fridays belong to Rick Hardeman and the Basin Street Six, and Saturdays to Bob Cantwell and His Stompers. Music begins at six on Sundays, at eight-thirty Mondays through Thursdays, and at nine Fridays and Saturdays.

RITZ, 254 W. 54th St. (541-8900)—There's usually a good reason to go the Ritz, but there's almost always a better reason to stay away. Even leaving aside its new midtown address—the sort of neighborhood you wake up in after you've been kidnapped—there's still the club's distressing pack-them-in, get-them-the-hell-out management tactics, and the fact that the atmosphere here, on any given night, is something between that of a high-school gym class and a police state. **THE CHURCH**—a guitar-driven, vaguely psychedelic rock outfit, which started up in Sydney about a decade ago—will perform here June 12. With them will be the Bristol-based **BLUE AEROPLANES,** who recently released their major-label début, "Swagger." Shows begin at nine Sundays through Thursdays, and at eleven Fridays and Saturdays.

SOUNDS OF BRAZIL, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—This former luncheonette has a tropical motif—straw huts, bamboo, a fake palm tree, a mosaic of gourds—and perhaps the city's most international booking policy: Brazil, Africa, and the Caribbean are just a few of the places explored. **YOMO TORO,** whose chief instrument is a ten-string Puerto Rican guitar called the cuatro, and whose credits include recording with Carlos Santana and composing and recording the soundtrack for Woody Allen's "Bananas," steps in on June 12; **BAABA MAAL** claims June 13. Music from nine Tuesdays through Thursdays, and from ten Fridays and Saturdays. Dining. Closed Sundays.

SWEET BASIL, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—An itinerary stop for the international jazz groupies who, on any given night, can be seen roaming the streets of the Village. Up front, there's a glass-enclosed café; in back is a larger room, with a pressed-tin ceiling, red brick, and more pinewood than a ski lodge. The blues-inflected saxophonist **STANLEY TURRENTINE** will be here June 5-10; the **MAL WALDRON** quintet gets started on June 12. The electrified big band of the late Gil Evans, now under the direction of his son, the trumpeter Miles Evans, is in action on Mondays. Tee-off time is ten. Dining.

TRAMPS, 45 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—Located on a Chelsea block that's fast becoming an urban Disneyland (a pool hall, indoor miniature golf, a trendy all-night diner, Limelight around the corner), this roller-rink-size bar-and-restaurant is slicker than the original Tramps, but the emphasis on solid rock and blues remains. **ZACHARY RICHARD** performs here through June 9.

VILLAGE GATE, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—One flight up, in the Terrace Bar, the **LEON PARKER** trio is in action June 5-10. **BILL MAYS** and **ED HOWARD** begin a week-long engagement on June 12. Music from ten.

VILLAGE VANGUARD, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—This windowless, pie-shaped basement has an illustrious history that embraces everyone from Judy Holliday to Lenny Bruce, from Pete Seeger and Leadbelly to Miles Davis and Sonny Rollins. The décor is homey and a little faded, like an attic full of memorabilia, but the music is anything but stale. Saxophonist **JOE HENDERSON'S** trio takes effect June 5-10; **FRANK WESS** and his foursome get under way on June 12. Mondays are reserved for the late Mel Lewis's big band. Music after ten.

Julia Fordham
at the Bottom Line

EDGE OF NIGHT LIFE

Myth: Suzy's column in the May 21 *Post* goes on about the harbor of Fire Island Pines as if it were Monte Carlo during the annual Red Cross gala and John Whyte were its Prince Rainier: a place where Claudette Colbert can be seen "dipping" into lobsters at the yacht club next to the Botel ("the only place to stay out there"); where Madonna, Elizabeth Taylor, and Lana Turner frolic on the boardwalk; and where residents dance under "Austrian crystal chandeliers" at the Pavilion.

Reality: The Pines may in fact be the most beautiful beach in the world, and you may see several people around the harbor dressed like Madonna and Elizabeth Taylor—especially around sunset, at teatime—but these girls are about as real as their tiaras. And should Ms. Colbert ever dine at the restaurant next to the patched-and-painted-concrete-balcony, share-a-bath group of rooms that are the only place to stay because they are literally the only place to stay, we hope she goes to the gym by the Botel's pool first—since tackling a crustacean prepared at the yacht club (find one resident who calls it that and we'll find you Lana Turner) requires more rip than dip. (Our favorite dish ever there was Sole Veronique, with the novel addition of a cheese topping and grapes avec pits.) As for the Hapsburg-inspired bunker that locals call Fort Disco, the priceless collection of wall-to-wall shirtless men who dance there on the weekends don't give a flick about the dining-room lighting. And an increasing number of them are almost as oblivious of the d.j.s, who refuse to acknowledge *Billboard*-fuls of new dance music, playing instead for a core of hard-liners who would dance the Aztec two-step if you hit two sticks together.

IN ANOTHER CATEGORY—PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

Circus Oz—A group from Melbourne, billed as "one of Australia's national treasures." The circus employs aboriginal music, Chinese acrobatics, performance art, and rock and roll, but no animals. (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907. Performances start June 6 and run through June 24.)

"The Decade Show Performance Series"—Presented by the Museum of Contemporary Hispanic Art, the New Museum of Contemporary Art, and the Studio Museum in Harlem. At Dance Theatre Workshop: Merián Soto and Pepón Osorio, Ana Castillo, Ishmael Houston-Jones, and Guillermo Gómez-Peña. (June 6.) . . . ¶ Rafael Montañez Ortiz, Alva Rogers and Lisa Jones, David Zambrano, and Ethyl Eichelberger. (June 7.) . . . ¶ Dan Kwong, Lydia Lunch and Emilio Cubeiro, Kaylynn Sullivan Two Trees, and Reno. (June 8.) . . . ¶ John Kelly, Jimmie Durham, Kathy Acker, and Dancenoise. (June 9.) (219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. Evenings at 8.)

P.S. 122—June 7-10 at 9:30: "Modern Art," a play written and directed by Eileen Myles. . . . ¶ June 8-10 at 8: "New Stuff," by James Adlesic, D. D. Dorvillier, and Alison Foley. . . . ¶ June 8-9 at 11: David Cale. (150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288.)

Tweed's Seventh Annual New Works Festival—June 4-6 at 8: "José's Textbook," a production by Neo Labos Dancetheatre, and "Ala-Ala," by Ching Gonzalez. . . . ¶ June 8-9 at 8 and June 10 at 3: Robert Moseley's "The Invitation." . . . ¶ June 8-9 at 11 and June 10 at 7: "The Blackmouths at Home," by Kevin Duffy and "The Swimming Pool," by Edgar Oliver. (Ohio Theatre, 66 Wooster St. For reservations, call 924-0077.)

ART

Dona Nelson's paintings are deep, clear emotional wells. Faces, names, landscapes, seasons, dreams, and odd old affections bubble up to the surface without rational order, to no pragmatic end. Nelson must continually rethink things pictorially in order to accommodate all her strays. Most often, her work has been likened to Magic Realism, to socially concerned painting of the W.P.A. era, and to David Park's portraits and street scenes, especially those involving images of men or children. But such comparisons fit only fleetingly. Nelson's work has touched on just about every stylistic point between the poles of total abstraction and outright realism, while avoiding both absolutes. She is also an artist whose rather old-fashioned emotive sincerity and sense of the personal can create a certain discomfort. For these reasons, people have tended either to resist her work completely or to believe in it with an unusual degree of partisan fervor. The absence of a fixed, formal agenda, and Nelson's stoic, poetic dedication to content, have liberated her. Technically, she is willing to do almost anything to convey meaning.

In her current show, at the Scott Hanson gallery (415 West Broadway; through June 9), there is a beautiful blue-and-white work titled "Whale Painting (People Leave Their Names Everywhere They Go)" whose scripted lines and limited color might suggest Cy Twombly. But there are also several other works—an image of a sufferer whose head is bandaged with strips of lovely yet sickly pastel-colored canvas, for instance, and a mood-indigo nocturne with a tree, a TV seen in profile, and figures leaping straight out of the set—that probably won't remind you of any painting you've yet seen.

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Museum Mile Festival—The twelfth annual open house takes place June 12, from six to nine in the evening. Fifth Avenue between 82nd and 104th Streets is accessible to pedestrians and street performers only, and eight of the museums along the way are free of charge.

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—"From Poussin to Matisse." The Russians seem to have entered the Western world by consuming French culture to the point of fetishization. This show—like so many the museum has mounted recently—celebrates not the great artists whose works are on display but the great amassers of French art, from Catherine the Great, who bought up vast collections whole and founded the Hermitage, to the non-aristocratic industrialists Shchukin and Morozov, who proved to be among the world's most astute collectors of Post-Impressionist paintings. But the show does include some superb works among its fifty paintings, most notably Poussin's "Tancred and Ermina," Watteau's "The Savoyard," and Fragonard's "The Stolen Kiss." There are some kitschy paintings as well, like Boucher's bawdy "Hercules and Omphale" and Vernet's startlingly mysterious "The Death of Virginie." Yet, despite the over-all quality, the pick-hit format is not engaging; the show doesn't really get going until the end, where there is a room of ten glorious Matisses painted between 1908 and 1913, among his finest works. Through July 29. . . . ¶ When two-thirds of the frames in a show are empty, one knows to pay strict attention to the frame itself. That is the desired effect in "Italian Renaissance Frames," which includes more than a hundred of the carved and gilded beauties. In a few cases—a Botticelli, an El Greco—paintings enhance what are works of art in themselves. Starts June 5. . . . ¶ Sixty-one nineteenth-century wooden power figures, masks, and royal objects from Central Africa, on loan from the Museum of Anthropology, in Berlin. Starts June 6. . . . ¶ No artist of this century could match Louis Comfort Tiffany's decorative creations in glass, bronze, and mosaic, but this show of lamps, chandeliers, windows, ceramics, and paintings does little more than confirm the razzle-dazzle taste of the marketplace: the emphasis is on the garish, gaudy extravaganzas—the Art Nouveau updates of Victorian bad taste. The featured lamps, for instance, are the rarest ones, which are usually the trickiest—and sometimes the tackiest. Still, there is a glorious "Dragonfly" chandelier in deepest blue and green, with glass globules attached, and a "Hydrangea" chandelier, whose sophisticated massing is articulated with magnificent coloration. The experimental surfaces of a "Cypriote" vase make it look like a chunk of the moon, and the "Lava" vases are fluidity itself; these humbler masterworks still look fresh. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—A retrospective featuring fifty-nine paintings by Francis Bacon. (A complementary show is at the Marlborough gallery, 40 W. 57th St.) . . . ¶ Throughout this century, it has seemed that every kind of abstract painting, even the most radical, has been coöpted by commercial design. What a pleasure, then, to see an inversion of this formula in a small exhibition of fabric samples by Gunta Stölzl, the Bauhaus master weaver, and her student, the perhaps better-known Anni Albers. Both designers took advantage of the period's industrial advances and applied a purist approach to the technology of weaving to create undeniable classics. Stölzl and Albers helped form the craft tradition of the Bauhaus, where the distinctions between fine and applied art were blissfully blurred. Through July 8. . . . ¶ Huge monochromatic wood engravings, mostly of a young woman with an enigmatic stare named Doris, by Franz Gertsch, a Swiss version of Chuck Close. Through June 26. . . . ¶ Barbara Steinman is showing a site-specific installation incorporating photography and video. Through July 31. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—The museum is closed for renovation until Autumn, 1991.

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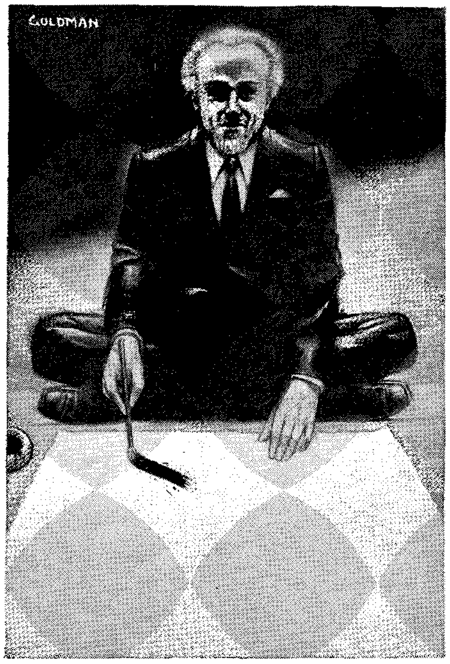


Mark Tobey

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—"Maurice Prendergast" (1858-1924), a show of more than a hundred oil paintings and watercolors by the early modernist. . . . ¶ "Signs of Love," a large-scale installation work by Ree Morton (1936-77) that is the magnum opus of this pivotal and shamefully overlooked artist, looks as original and unsettling as it did when it was first exhibited in the Whitney's 1977 Biennial. With its painted and swagged ladders, frilly ribbons and flowers, and postage-stamp portraits of a fairy-tale prince and princess, it is an irreverent celebration of sentimentality. It exists in a realm somewhere between painting and sculpture, without caring about the conventions of either; it was created at a time when the austerity of minimalism still reigned. It also celebrates the brazen freedom of feminism, of an as yet unnamed post-modernist spirit, and of a community of artists whose decisions were based on ideas and personal challenges, not on the desires of the market. Through July 22. (Open Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—"The Intimate Interiors of Édouard Vuillard" includes more than a hundred paintings and works on paper, all completed between 1890 and 1900. Through July 30. . . . ¶ A companion exhibition of prints by the Nabis painters, including works by Vuillard, Bonnard, Maurice Denis, Félix Vallotton, and Ker-Xavier Roussel. . . . ¶ The exhibition "Facing History," a pure example of art illustrating history, traces the image of blacks in American art from 1710 to 1940. More often than not, as one might suspect, the images are primarily of servitude and the method used is caricature. The paintings, drawings, and occasional sculptures are best viewed from an iconographic point of view, and the purpose of the black man in John Singleton Copley's "Watson and the Shark," the best work on display, continues to be the source of heated disagreement. Through June 25. (Open daily, except Tuesdays, 10 to 5.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—"Art from Northeastern Zaire" will include four hundred artifacts, such as sculptures, musical instruments, furniture, and weapons, along with many photographs and drawings, all from the museum's Lang-Chapin Expedition (1909-1915). Starts June 8. (Open Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 10 to 5:45; Wednesdays, 10 to 9; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5.)

China Institute, 125 E. 65th St.—"Clear as Crystal, Red as Flame" is an excellent primer on glassmaking in China from the fourteenth century through the early twentieth. Curiously, glass seems to be the only medium the Chinese used to mimic other materials. On view are vessels that look like porcelain, beads that approximate stones, and vases that ape celadon ware; the last have the lovely inner glow that can be achieved only with glass. Through June 16. (Open Mondays through Saturdays, 10 to 5.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—An examination of the Danish porcelain industry from 1760 to the present, including vases, figures, and original pieces from the first Flora Danica table service, on loan from the Danish Royal Family. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge from 5 to 9; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

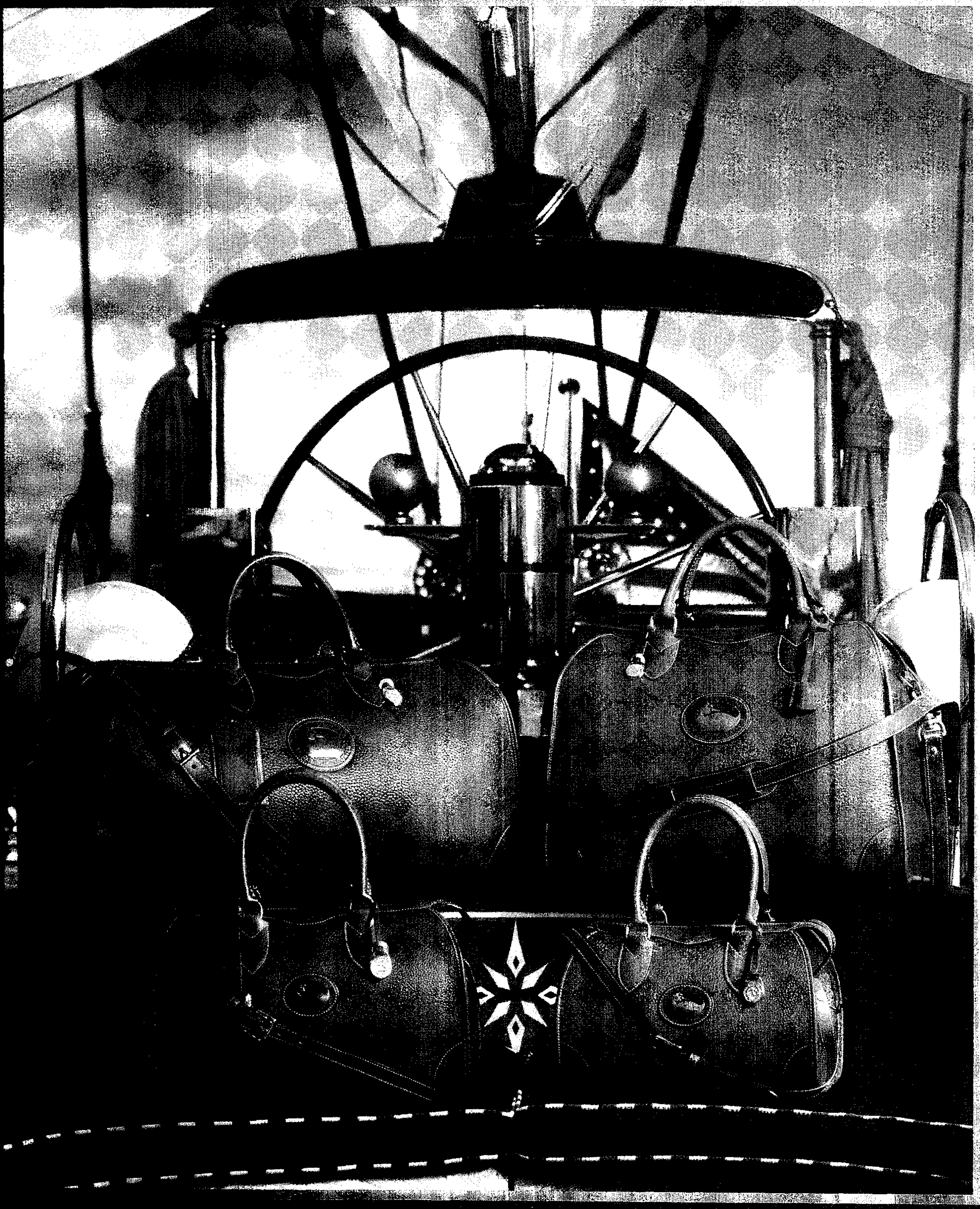
Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St.—Writing boxes, tea caddies, and *sake* cups are among the forty pieces of Japanese lacquer ware on view. Through June 24. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 5.)

Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—"In the Court of the Sultan." In this comprehensive display on the life of the Sephardic Jews of the Ottoman Empire, most of the objects—even the ornate ones—are unspectacular. The period documented is from the mid-nineteenth century through the early twentieth, a time of decline for the Ottomans, of increased Western influence, and of growing intolerance toward Jews. From the velvet bedspreads that were remade into ark curtains to the ceremonial and everyday costumes (some decreed by law), the menorahs, and the furniture, a homey aesthetic dominates. But it is nonetheless a fascinating exhibition, one that effectively captures the spirit of daily life. Through June 28. (Open Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, noon to 5; Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—A show of more than a hundred drawings, from the fifteenth century to the nineteenth, on loan from the Museum Boymans-van Beuningen, in Rotterdam. Included are works by Dürer, Rembrandt, Goya, and others. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—An exhibit devoted to Portugal's pioneering maritime exploration, notably of Brazil, and its impact on European culture. Maps, treaties, and navigational instruments from the mid-fifteenth century to the late sixteenth are on display, along with manuscripts, letters, and paintings. (Gottesman Exhibition Hall. Open daily, except Sundays, 10 to 6.)

The Decade Show—This show has a noble, anti-authoritarian ambition—the forced integration of the Eurocentric art scene through a review of the nineteen-eighties art world that embraces the "others" ignored by the mainstream. The exhibition is well intentioned, but it tries to do too many conflicting things, and it's richer for the issues it raises than for the art it contains. It is a collaborative event organized by three institutions (the Museum of Contemporary Hispanic Art, the Studio Museum in Harlem, and the New Museum), and it is divided according to themes, two per venue. By far the most cohesive installation is at the Studio Museum, where Group Material and Barbara Kruger seem to be the only ones to have addressed themselves to complex issues of the show, and where one work after another—by whites, African-Americans (Hammons, Colescott, Edwards), and Hispanics (Azaceta)—is installed to look as good as each is. What the show calls for, ultimately, is no less than the dismantling of the entire value structure upon which judgment is currently based: no more artist geniuses, no more masterpieces, no more connoisseurship, as they are known. However ideologically up to date the viewpoint may sound, it requires a much more radical redefinition of art than any the system would willingly adopt. The



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ART—Cont'd

exhibition runs concurrently at the **NEW MUSEUM,** 583 Broadway (open Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, noon to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, noon to 8); the **MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY HISPANIC ART,** 584 Broadway (open Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays, 11 to 5; Thursdays and Fridays, 11 to 8); and the **STUDIO MUSEUM IN HARLEM,** 144 W. 125th St. (open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6). A free shuttle bus runs between SoHo and Harlem on each Saturday during the show.

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

VASILY ERMILOV (1894-1968)—This pioneer of Constructivist art in the Ukraine lived the latter part of his life in obscurity, producing the officially approved social-realist art by day and continuing in his modernist idiom on the sly at night. The current exhibition is extensive, including work from throughout his career, with an emphasis on small paintings on paper. There are also several refined but dull figurative studies, and a model and photodocuments of a major work, the quintessential Constructivist speaker's rostrum Ermilov designed in 1927 for the tenth anniversary of the October Revolution. Some of the most animated works are book designs from the twenties and thirties. Through June 8. (Hutton, 33 E. 74th St.)

LYONEL FEININGER (1871-1956)—These small drawings, from 1908 to 1912 and never before exhibited, trace Feininger's transformation from cartoonist to artist. The touch lightens, the palette softens, the figures become elongated, and—poof!—before your very eyes, a minor master is born. Through June 16. (Moeller, 52 E. 76th St.)

SHORT LIST—MARSDEN HARTLEY, Salander-O'Reilly, 20 E. 79th St. (open Mondays, through June 30); **LAWRENCE KUPFERMAN,** Mathes, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St. (through June 29); **ROBERT RAUSCHENBERG,** Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St. (through June 27); **ANTONIO SEGUI,** Bernard, 33 E. 74th St. (through June 29).

GALLERIES—57TH STREET AREA

JOHN BELLANY—Recent narrative paintings, with surrealistic elements and carnival color, that are reminiscent of Ensor. Through June 16. (Ruth Siegel, 24 W. 57th St.)

EUGÈNE CARRIÈRE (1849-1906)—An exquisite exhibition of nineteen sepia-toned paintings and one pastel by this underrated French Symbolist. Carrière's figures are enveloped in a rapturous haze of sorrow; the Pietà-like "Death of Gauguin" depicts one of the most tender embraces ever painted. Through June 30. (Kent, 41 E. 57th St.)

CHRISTOPHER GERLACH / SUZANNE PINES—Well-executed realistic paintings of country roads. / Fussy paintings of the Amish, with a touch of Wyeth sappiness. Through June 16. (Fischbach, 24 W. 57th St.)

GILBERT & GEORGE—In contrast with the sometimes dark, sometimes melancholy tone of the British duo's photo works, these new pieces—kaleidoscopic arrangements of picture postcards, a type of material used in some of their earliest works—are bright and hopeful. Through June 9. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St. . . . ¶ Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway, has a complementary show.)

RON GORCHOV—Having emerged too late for Abstract Expressionism and much too early for post-minimalism, this perpetually "emerging" gestural abstractionist has been falling through the cracks since the early sixties. His newest, shield-shaped paintings, much humbler than his past works, are quite strong. The brushwork is agitated, yet fluid and watery; the forms are organic, sometimes fishlike. The strong surrealistic feeling of the paintings places them squarely in the world of the pre-Abstract Expressionist Rothko. Through June 9. (Tilton, 24 W. 57th St.)

ROBERT GWATHMEY (1903-88)—This artist depicted a rich cross-section of American life with an emphasis on black subjects, especially in the forties and fifties—the period focussed on in this show. Gwathmey tended to employ an over-all distribution of color and form, dividing his forms into registers of different colors as if he were working in stained glass. In large overview scenes, this none too inventive abstraction often fractures and depletes the narrative. The best works are the more centralized images, such as the tender "Lullaby," in which a mother sings to the child she cradles in her arms. Through June 15. (Dintenfass, 50 W. 57th St.)

ANSELM KIEFER—In his ability to convey spatial illusions of breathtaking emotional sweep, Kiefer may very well be unmatched. In this theatrically dazzling, technically formidable show, we find him immersed in the mystical systems and apocryphal figures of the Cabbalah. What he offers is consummate and consuming Zeitgeist art. Through June 16. (Marian Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

WILLIAM WEGMAN—Wegman's earlier paintings, often based on a single motif, such as the image of a boat or plane found in a children's book, were plangent and sweet, but a little anemic. His recent paintings, however, offer a view of a very personal atomic-nostalgic wasteland. And as you enter the back room, expect to be shaken—to the bone—by a group of the last photo portraits of Wegman's immortal Man Ray. What you will see is an old weimaraner, out of costume this time and stripped of artifice, as King Lear. Through June 9. (Holly Solomon, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Open Mondays.)

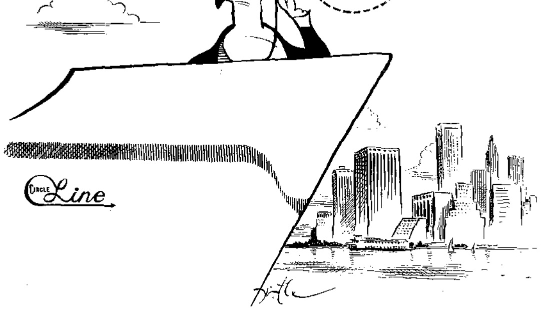
"OUTSIDERS"—A fine display. Included are the childlike drawings of dogs, cats, and other animals by Bill Traylor, a former slave; Justin McCarthy's succulent paintings of cantaloupes, yellow puffball dahlias, and camels in the desert, which stand comparison with works by the better-trained Malcolm Morley; and maniacally obsessive phantasmagoric portrait drawings by Ted Gordon, who is so hard on his ballpoints that his patterned lines are literally carved into paperboard. Through June 22. (Ross, 50 W. 57th St. Open Mondays, closed Saturdays.)

SHORT LIST—BROOKS ANDERSON, Schmidt Bingham, 41 W. 57th St. (open Mondays, through June 16); **FRANCIS BACON,** Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. (open Mondays, through June 29); **ROMARE BEARDEN,** ACA, 41 E. 57th St. (through June 16); **HANS HOFMANN,** Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St. (through June 29); **RENÉ MAGRITTE,** Pace, 32 E. 57th St. (through June 30); and Pace-MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. (through June 29); **MARK TOBEY,** Daverio, 41 E. 57th St. (through June 16).

GALLERIES—SoHo

DONALD BAECHLER—Drawings of the card suits against collaged grounds that include an occasional printed ship, soldier, or flower. These works are quite impressive, much better than the artist's usual faux-naïf fare. Through June 16. (Kasmin, 580 Broadway.)

FRANCESCO CLEMENTE / OUATTARA—Ten intensely poetic drawings from 1981 entitled "Ten Bad Mothers," which display Clemente at his self-absorbed best—birth images, fetal adults, an occasional egg, and an internal organ, a man vomiting what could be a baby, or a phallus. / Large paintings with lots of sticks, tribal and church imagery, and ancient Egyptian motifs in earthen browns by an African Palladino. They are skillful and ambitious, but low on emotion. Through June 23. (Baghoomian, 555 Broadway.)



PIER CONSAGRA—Paintings of overlapping, rapidly drawn swirls in all sorts of colors, with an emphasis on purples and greens. These energetic and competent works are the result of a very complicated process—involving sculpture, photography, and squeegee printing—that appears to have had little effect on the final product. Through June 16. (Toll, 146 Greene St.)

JULIO GALAN—The artist's second one-man gallery show is as affecting as his first, and more knowing—if such a thing is possible. Galan, something of a professional enfant terrible, has been brushing up on his Francesco Clemente, it seems. Still, this show includes a split-mirror image in which the artist makes the best, most commonsensical use of a diptych format seen in some time. And with another painting—a hilarious, hyper-Proustian, oblong portrait of the artist as a young invalid—he weighs in with an absolutely original instant classic. Through June 29. (Nosei, 100 Prince St.)

RONALD JONES—Sculptures of objects combined in odd ways—a trestle with a model of the Jarvik artificial heart atop it, for example. While these works have a deeper political content than his earlier pieces, they are more visually remote: the use of color is more arbitrary and forced, the subject matter more rarefied and obscure. Through June 16. (Metro Pictures, 150 Greene St.)

NICHOLAS KRUSHENICK—In case you've been wondering what ever happened to this Pop and Op artist: not much, according to this exhibition of paintings from 1966 to the present. These are airless, brashly colored, cartoonish Pop paintings, containing puns on art illusionism, but only of the most simplistically decorative sort. Through June 16. (Newburg, 580 Broadway.)

ZOFIA KULIK—Collages made of photographs of nudes—mostly male—arranged in repetitive patterns to form carpets, pinwheels, and medals. The works by this young Polish artist mock different sorts of European authoritarianism, but they are pretty dull, especially when the over-all designs dominate. Pieces that incorporate an occasional bullet, seashell, or flag are more compelling. Through June 23. (Postmasters, 80 Greene St.)

CARL PALAZZOLO—This talented and very deft painter is also a relentless processor of styles. Here, in the midst of lyrical-abstract passages that may remind viewers of recent work by Ross Bleckner, Terry Winters, and Pat Steir, among others, the artist also gives vent to his obsession with a single painting by John Singer Sargent—"The Daughters of Edward D. Boit," painted in 1882. Images of these Bostonian sisters and their appurtenances crop up as fully realized copies, as fragments, as pentimenti, and, ultimately, as question marks. Palazzolo's work is visually enjoyable, as always, but also so blithely arbitrary it can set the marbles rattling in your head. Through June 23. (Lennon, Weinberg, 580 Broadway.)

CHARLES RAY / RICHARD BLOES—A very odd sculptural self-portrait by an unusually intriguing artist. In this work, which is far more interesting than any Photo-Realist sculpture, he appears as a mannequin, frozen in a relaxed gesture and dressed in his unself-conscious, leisurely best. / A complicated contraption that looks a bit like a mega-loom: lots of cranks and pulleys, a tray of water and a fan, and other gizmos, surrounded by ticking clocks and video images of the whole thing in motion. The piece is bereft of both wonder and wit. Through June 9. (Feature, 484 Broome St.)

JULIAN SCHNABEL—The Pace gallery opens its new downtown outlet, in what had been Leo Castelli's Greene Street space, with the season's most ambitious exhibition, a Julian Schnabel Production of massive-scale sculptures, all in bronze. The walls are lined with nonfigurative "Tomb Panels," which are so resonant with emotion that they could be a postmodern version of the Medicis' final resting place. There's a funny piece called "Barbara Bush Skipping Down the Champs Élysées," and a history-of-art sculpture consisting of a Beuysian table with Indian dolls, a primitive sculpture of the sort favored by the early modernists, and a hinge, all supported by inverted amphorae. Through June 29. (142 Greene St.)

"AMERICAN MASTERS OF THE 60s"—A power show in a new power space, similar in size and scale to a floor at the Whitney. Among the most resonant of these superb art works from the sixties, by all the expected blue-chip names, are those by Lichtenstein, Smith, Martin, Judd, Serra, Nauman, and Smithson. In most instances, older pieces are juxtaposed with more recent works by the same artists. A silver "Liz" by Andy Warhol, for example

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hangs opposite one of his "Last Supper" paintings. Both are superior works, and the dialogue between them succinctly tells part of Warhol's complex story. But many of the juxtapositions simply serve to remind us that these artists continue to produce good work. Through June 23. (Shafrazi, 130 Prince St.)

"The Work of Art in the Age of Perestroika"—This display of recent works from the Soviet Union has the kind of vibrant energy New York has not witnessed since the Mickey-and-Judy shows of Colab and the early East Village scene. The emphasis is on the younger generation, and while the over-all quality of the work is high, there is something unsettling about the circumstances: it is an art that has risen through the cracks as a form of creative resistance, but it has now been seized by an alien marketplace that consumes first and thinks later. There are works that are reminiscent of what has been produced here over the past fifteen years, but to read too much into those connections would be to entirely miss the vitality of this new crop of artists. Through June 30. (Kind, 136 Greene St.)

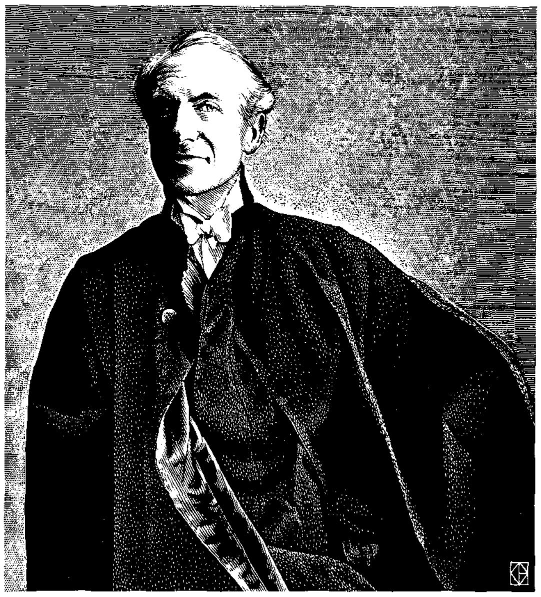
Group Show—One wonders why there is nothing in the entire main space of the Rosen gallery except, in one corner, the handsome, compelling, but hardly space-invading photographs of rows of animal trophies and hides by Zoe Leonard. It may be to encourage you to look around for the remainder of the show. As we walked from the main gallery to the back gallery, which holds photographic collaborations between artists like Robert Gober and Christopher Wool and Alan McCollum and Laurie Simmons, we didn't notice at first the low-level bellowing sound, like that of an iron lung, which comes from the pulsing wall between the two spaces. But that's the rest of the show. Wendy Jacob has reconstructed the short wall so that it actually breathes, expanding and contracting—an aesthetic version of a "Candid Camera" skit. Through June 23. (130 Prince St.)

Short List—**elaine anthony,** Haller, 415 West Broadway (through June 30); **mathew brittan** and **michael schackwitz,** Condeso-Lawler, 76 Greene St. (through June 10); **doriana chiarini,** Ala, 560 Broadway (through June 30); **claes eklundh,** Dolan Maxwell, 154 Wooster St. (through June 30); **max ferguson,** Henoch, 80 Wooster St. (through June 30); **ellsworth kelly,** 65 Thompson Street Gallery (open Mondays, closed Saturdays, through July 31); **markus lüpertz,** Boone, 417 West Broadway (through June 30); **winifred lutz,** Pearl, 420 West Broadway (through June 30); **david nash,** Louver, 130 Prince St. (through June 23); **tony oursler,** Brown, 560 Broadway (through June 30); **gerardo pita,** Staempfli, 415 West Broadway (through June 13); **edwin schlossberg,** Feldman, 31 Mercer St. (through June 9); **kiki smith,** Fawbush, 568 Broadway (through June 14); **theodoros stamos,** Dorsky, 578 Broadway (through June 9); **paul thek,** Alexander, 59 Wooster St. (through June 30).

OTHER GALLERIES

Karen Finley—A bumpy but important exhibition by the controversial performance artist, who passionately takes on issues of physical, emotional, and psychological violence, and who is the most recent victim of misinformed attempts to censor art. The show consists primarily of long essays about rape, abortion, AIDS and health insurance, and the Catholic Church and homophobia, which are painted directly on baby-pink and Lake Placid-blue colored walls. "It's my body/ It's not Pepsi's body/ It's not Nancy Reagan's body/ It's not Congress's body/ It's not the Supreme Court's body," she writes in one particularly potent passage. Most of the work is fuelled by anger, but some is quite poetic and hopeful, especially a set of drawings of women embracing children and planting trees, subtitled "Faith," "Hope," and "Charity." Through June 16. (Franklin Furnace, 112 Franklin St. Opens at noon.)

Charles Saxon (1920-88)—Original watercolors for *New Yorker* covers, plus cartoons and sketchbooks. Through June 29. (Butler Library, Columbia University, 6th floor, Broadway at 114th St. Mondays through Fridays, 9 to 4:45.)



Cecil Beaton

PHOTOGRAPHY

To see Elvis, 1956, go to the Paula Allen gallery (560 Broadway; through June 16) for Jay Leviton's portraits of the King when he was just getting used to the throne. These photographs capture Elvis capturing America better than any we've ever seen. Leviton originally took the shots for *Collier's* magazine when Presley was on tour in Florida, and he caught him onstage and off, alone and with other people, in a way that makes you understand why he drove his fans crazy. Among the forty photographs in the show are two shots of Presley sitting with a girl who has fainted—from adoration, we gather. The look on Presley's face is one of wonder. It's as if he's amazed at his power as a conjurer of emotion.

In almost all these pictures of Presley, there's the feeling that he's "on," projecting all his stuff. One image, however, shows Elvis in the back seat of a car, looking straight ahead as his fans peer in the windows. His eyes, and his set expression, give us a glimpse of the strain that human idols suffer.

Bernd and Hilla Becher—Sixty-four exquisitely printed black-and-white photographs taken over the past twenty-five years. The images are of familiar-looking exposed industrial structures—gas tanks, grain elevators, water towers—and there is a particularly compelling group of fifteen "Blast Furnaces" that hits you with emotional impact of an epic series of figure studies by Philip Guston. The Bechers' unpopulated visions, with their chilling, thrilling human echoes, put viewers into the Beckettian roles of God and dog—between a rock and a hard, fast place. Through June 17. (Dia Art Foundation, 548 W. 22nd St. Opens at noon Thursdays through Sundays.)

Bill Brandt (1904-83) / **Graham Nash**—A group of nudes by a photographer who revelled in the graphic power of black tones, in the warmth of grays, and in the burst of light that whites can bring. These photographs are so intimate that the models don't seem like strangers or like objects—and that purity is what makes the work trustworthy. / Although famous as a rock musician, Nash has been taking photographs since he was ten years old, and this show proves his seriousness and his visual talent. His least fussed-with portraits are strong and honest: there's a picture of his son peering into an aquarium—his eyes huge, his mouth open in wonder—that's a striking portrait of amazement. Through June 16. (Lowinsky, 584 Broadway.)

Lee Miller (1907-77) / **Marion Post Wolcott**—Miller's photographs are proof of the remarkable life she led, of the fantastic company she kept, and of the role she played in documenting both the most creative and the most horrible aspects of twentieth-century history. Her pictures of artists (Picasso, Cornell, her onetime lover Man Ray) are warm and knowing, and her concentration-camp photographs bear witness to human evil and superhuman courage. Through June 10. / The photographs Wolcott took during the Depression, under the auspices of the Farm Securities Administration, add significantly to our vision of rural America of that time, but her most personal shots are those of her family: they are casual and full of warmth and feeling. Through June 24. (International Center of Photography Midtown, Sixth Ave. at 43rd St. Daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 8.)

Short List—**cecil beaton,** Danziger, 415 West Broadway (starts June 12); **margaret courtney-clarke,** Witkin, 415 West Broadway (opens at noon on Saturdays, through July 13); **lois conner** and **joe maloney,** Laurence Miller, 138 Spring St. (through June 23); **eric fischl,** Koury Wingate, 578 Broadway (through June 23); **mauricio herrador,** O.K. Harris, 383 West Broadway (through July 14); **barbara kasten,** Weber, 142 Greene St. (through June 16); **pascal kern,** Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (open Mondays, closed Saturdays, through June 30); **leon levinstein,** Photofind, 138 Spring St. (through June 29); **wowe,** Engelhorn, 591 Broadway (through July 14).

MUSIC

Luigi Cherubini was a composer who clearly lacked the common touch. Although respected by Beethoven, Goethe, and Haydn; revered by a generation of French composers who were his pupils; and admired and revived in our century by the likes of Toscanini and Callas, he has never become a popular favorite. There is a certain severity of expression and a pride in restrained craftsmanship in his work that make this easy to understand. What makes it seem a little strange is that whatever operatic success he enjoyed in his own lifetime had a good deal to do with catching the shifting moods of the audience in post-Revolutionary Paris, where he was a dominant (as opposed to esteemed) figure for about a dozen years beginning in 1791.

In 1800, the right mixture was a semi-serious opera (using the forms and language of comic opera, but not to farcical purpose) about danger and rescue and ties of loyalty and reconciliation cutting across boundaries of social position. "Les Deux Journées," produced in that year and performed for a good many after, concerns the rescue of wrongly maligned aristocrats by a water carrier. As "Der Wasserträger" it once had some circulation in Germany, and its overture survives as a concert piece under that name.

Yves Abel, a young Canadian conductor whose eyes light up with affection for the score as he describes its felicities to a visitor, is about to lead three staged performances of the opera (in its original French) at Florence Gould Hall (55 East 59th Street), on June 8, 9, and 10.

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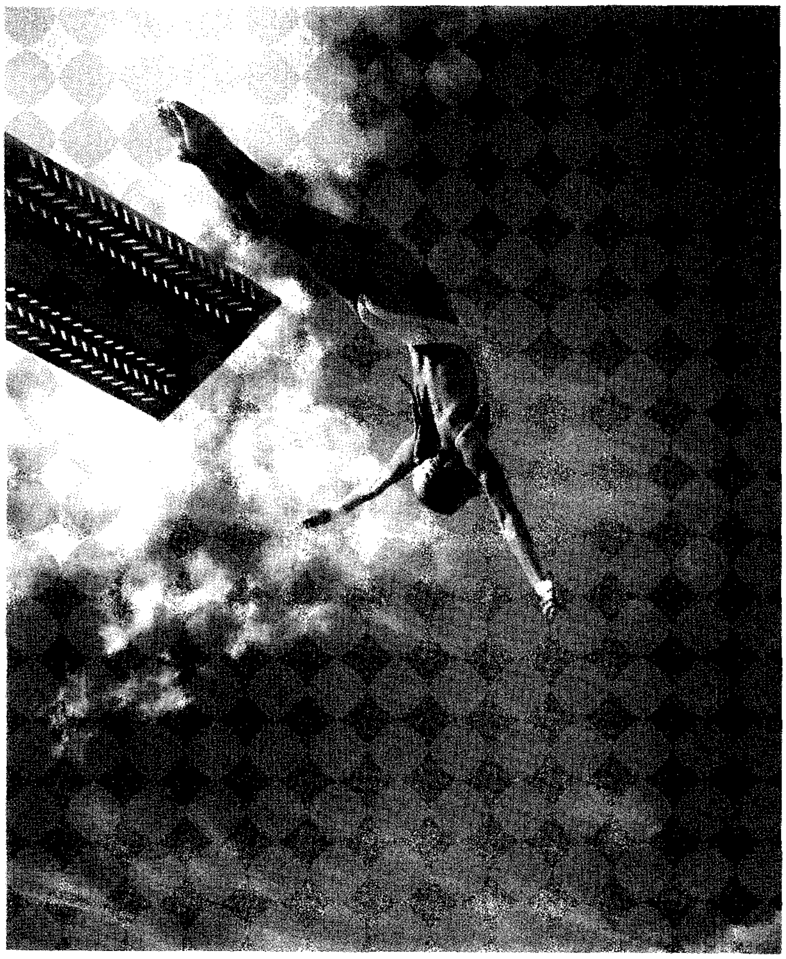

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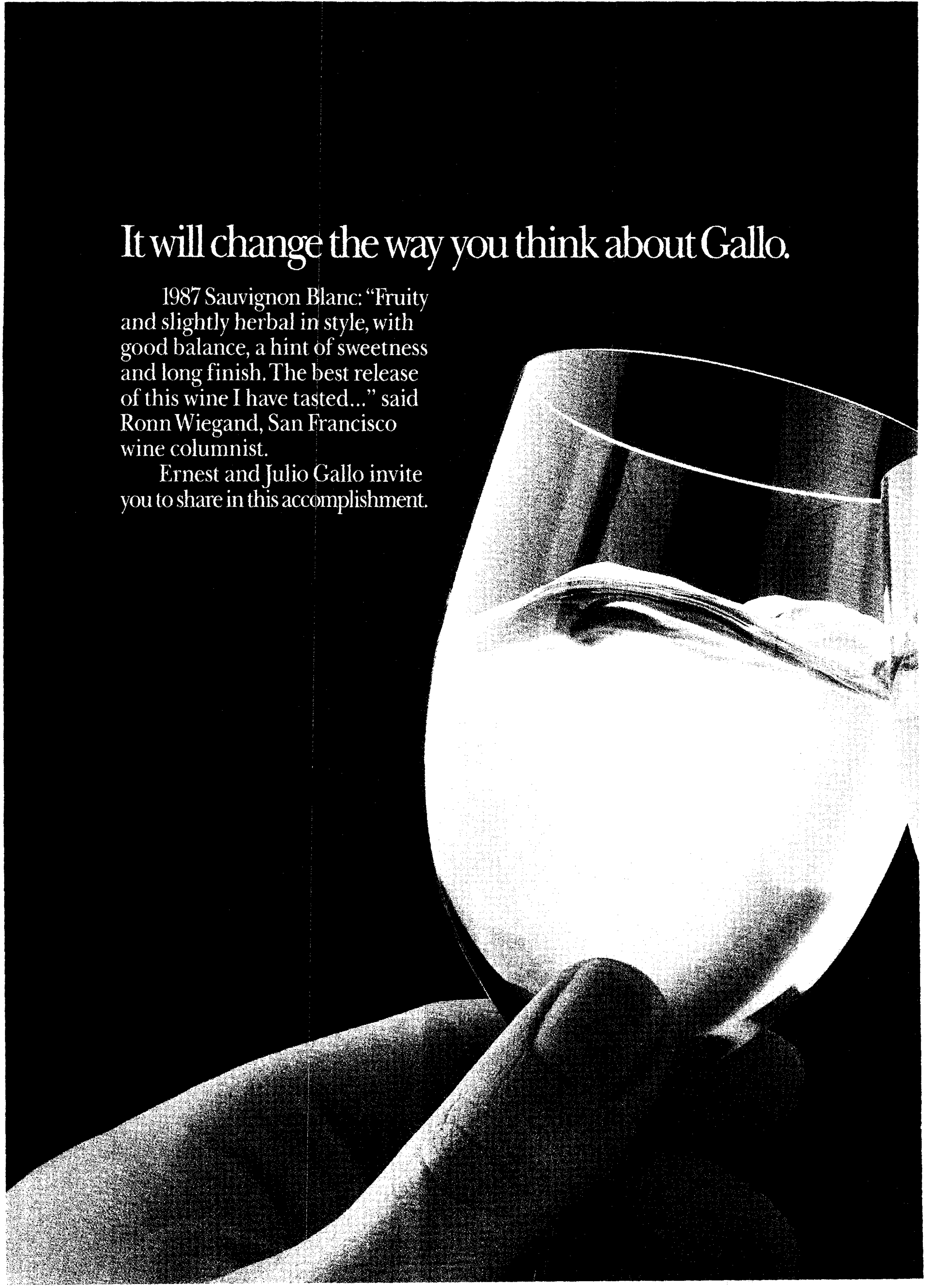

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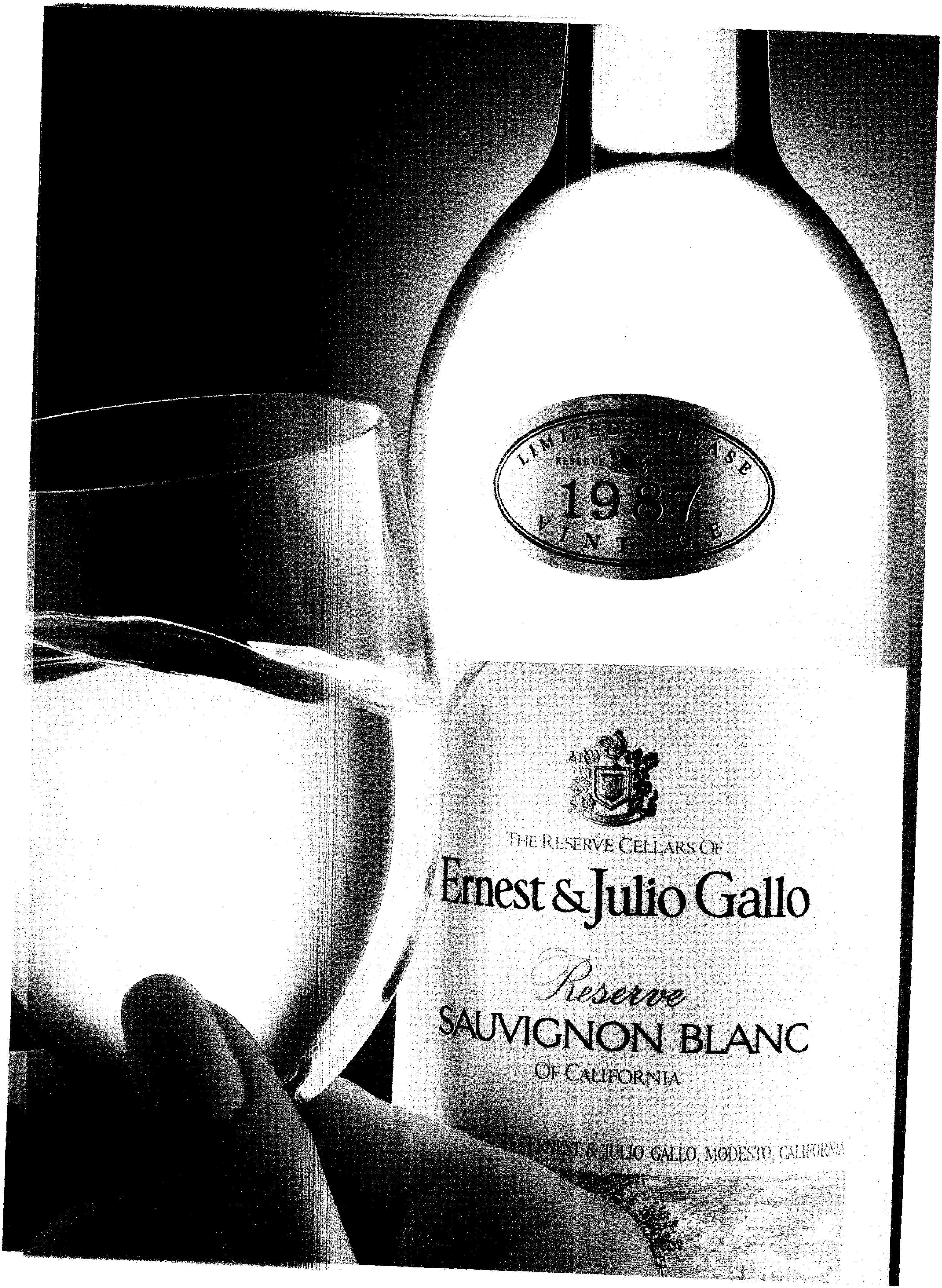
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MUSIC–Cont'd

All-Beethoven Concert—Itzhak Perlman, violin; Pinchas Zukerman, viola; and Lynn Harrell, cello, in three string trios. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440. June 6-7 at 8.)

Aurora—With guest artist Sandra Miller, flute, in a program of baroque chamber music. (St. Michael's Church, Amsterdam Ave. at 99th St. June 6 at 8. Admission by contribution.)

José Carreras—Tenor, with Lorenzo Bavaj, piano, in a benefit concert. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. June 7 at 7:30.)

Concordia: A Chamber Symphony—Marin Alsop conducting works by David Rimelis, George Antheil, Aaron Copland, Larry Schwartz, and John Lewis. Performed with the Modern Jazz Quartet. (Alice Tully Hall. 362-1911. June 8 at 8.)

Concert Royal and the New York Baroque Dance Company—James Richman conducts the original-instruments orchestra; Catherine Turocy choreographed. (Marymount Manhattan Theatre, 221 E. 71st St. 279-4200. June 8-9 at 8.)

Danish Chamber Music—Two quartets and a pianist perform works by Carl Nielsen, Herman Koppel, and Steen Pade. (Alice Tully Hall. 362-1911. June 13 at 8.)

Florilegium Chamber Choir—JoAnn Rice directs premières by Donald Grantham and David Kuperman, and Schubert's "Miriam's Song." (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 362-8719. June 13 at 8.)

Metropolitan Opera, Concert Productions—"Rigoletto," with Ruth Ann Swenson, Taro Ichihara, and Alain Fondary; conducted by Marcello Panni. (Great Lawn, Central Park, June 12 at 8.) . . . ¶ "La Traviata," with Karen Huffstodt, Alfredo Kraus, and Sherrill Milnes; Christian Badea. (Prospect Park, Brooklyn, June 13 at 8.)

JAZZ / POP / ROCK PERSONAL APPEARANCES

UB40—After ten albums, UB40 (their name comes from a British unemployment form), have carved a niche for themselves as one of the most consistent, dependable reggae bands around. Their clean arrangements and punchy horns heighten the down-to-earth, bum-shaking feel of their songs, and in concert, the UB's (with Ali Campbell's inimitable voice in the lead) are an infectious, dance-filled ensemble. (Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. June 5-6 at 8. . . . ¶ Jones Beach Theatre. 1-516 221-1000. June 10 at 8.)

Julio Iglesias—Bing Crosby and Elvis are the only solo performers who have sold more records than Julio José Iglesias de la Cueva, the son of a prominent Madrid gynecologist and the most universally recognized personification of the Latin lover since Valentino. In concert his modest and slightly self-mocking patter is a nice counterpoint to his music's grandiose and echoing simulacrum of passion. The most remarkable sound one might hear is the communal female lament that arises when Julio announces, as he sometimes does, that he enjoys singing more than lovemaking. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 247-4777. June 8-15 at 8.)

Madonna—"Strike a pose, there's nothing to it" —yeah, right. Well, if vogueing is how this cultural icon chooses to express herself, who's going to argue? Ms. Ciccone has been doing some exceptional posing for years, and she's certainly captured the public's imagination. But there's still something missing from her music. Her songs, mostly brittle dance tunes and tepid ballads, tend to date rather quickly (O.K., "Into the Groove" is the exception), and her current hit, "Vogue," has a built-in obsolescence. Her latest album, mostly music "inspired" by the film "Dick Tracy," is a disaster. She may be photographed like a chanteuse, but she can't sing like one. And her current look in concert is too harsh: some of the costumes, which were designed by Jean-Paul Gaultier, are out of a Fritz Lang nightmare. The tour has some captivating moments, but for the most part Madonna seems to have disappeared inside her own star-making machinery. (Nassau Coliseum. 1-516 422-9222. June 11-13 at 8.)

Rickie Lee Jones and Lyle Lovett—This is an inspired pairing of American pop-music eccentrics. Lovett, a razor-thin Texan who wears a high, ten-gallon haircut on top of his head, writes tremendously effective meta-songs whose sentiments are completely undermined by perverse wit. He plays country swing that's tight and on the money but also hilarious; he's Randy Travis possessed by the soul of the comedian Steven Wright. Rickie Lee Jones, on the other hand, doesn't have an ironic bone in her body. She has always been nakedly self-expressive, sometimes to the point of mannered formlessness. After a troubled early career followed by a five-year break, she's back with the same slumming-Kewpie-doll voice and street-transcendental lyrics but with a lot more control and focus. (Pier 84, Twelfth Ave. at 45th St. June 13 at 7:30. For information about tickets, call 247-4777.)

Madonna

Melissa Etheridge—Beacon Theatre. June 7-10 at 8.

Jeffrey Schanzer Ensemble—St. Ann's Church, 157 Montague St., Brooklyn. June 9 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.

Julio Iglesias

Connie Crothers–Lenny Popkin Quartet—Greenwich House, 27 Barrow St. June 9 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.

Everything but the Girl—Beacon Theatre. June 11 at 7:30.

Warren Vaché—Roundabout Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. 420-1883. June 11 at 7:30.

Jazz Festival—June 7: The Count Basie Orchestra, conducted by Frank Foster. . . . ¶ June 8: Mongo Santamaria. . . . ¶ June 9: Dizzy Gillespie and the Henry Street Settlement Symphony Orchestra. . . . ¶ June 12: The Joanne Brackeen trio. (Henry Street Settlement, 466 Grand St. 598-0400. Evenings at 7. Through June 17.)

Symphony Space—June 8 at 8: Oliver Lake & Spencer Barefield, Foday Musa Suso, Mieczyslaw Litwinski, Karl Berger, and others. . . . ¶ June 9 at 8: McCullough's Sons of Thunder, Les Misérables Brass Band, and Bob Stewart's First Line Band. (Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400.)

SPORTS

HOME TEAMS

Mets—Vs. the Montreal Expos, June 4-6 at 7:35. . . . ¶ Vs. the Pittsburgh Pirates, June 7-8 at 7:35, June 9 at 7:05, and June 10 at 1:35.

Yankees—Vs. the Boston Red Sox, June 12-14 at 7:30.

(The Mets play at Shea Stadium, 1-718 507-8499; and the Yankees play at Yankee Stadium, 293-6000.)

RACING

Horses—At Belmont: Daily, except Tuesdays, at 1. The Belmont Stakes, the last race in the Triple Crown, is on June 9 at 5:30. The Hempstead Handicap is also on June 9, and the Mother Goose is on June 10. . . . At Monmouth Park, Oceanport, N.J.: Weekdays at 1:30. . . . At Atlantic City Race Course: Starting June 6, Mondays and Wednesdays through Saturdays at 7:25. . . . **TROTTING** at Yonkers: Mondays through Thursdays at 7:30, and Fridays and Saturdays at 6:30. . . . At the Meadowlands: Weeknights at 7:30. . . . At Saratoga Raceway, Saratoga Springs: Tuesdays through Saturdays at 7:45.

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Newsletter—The New York City Transit Authority's new monthly publication answers nitty-gritty questions from passengers about the five-borough system. Examples from the May issue: "Why aren't the token-booth agents allowed to open the gates for baby strollers, shopping carts, or luggage racks?" (from Helen Austin, the Bronx); and "What's it mean when a conductor says he's 'cutting out a door'?" (from David Edelman, Brooklyn). The answers are somewhat less quotable. The newsletter is available at token booths, airports, and hotels, and a mysterious but uplifting slogan graces its front cover: "More honking, more kissing, more puddles, more lox."

Report from Rome—Walter Persegati, the former secretary-general of the Vatican Museums, will give two lectures—with slides and a short film—about the controversial restoration of Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel frescoes. (Ethical Culture Society, 2 W. 64th St. June 7 at 5 and 8. For information about tickets, call 874-5210.)

Roses—For the first time ever, the Heritage Rose Foundation, a group dedicated to the preservation of old-fashioned (purebred, Mayflower-era) roses, will hold its annual meeting at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden on June 8-9. Lectures on rose identification and tours of the Cranford Rose Garden (where one-third of the roses have a pedigree) are open to the public, but reservations are necessary. Call 1-718 622-4433.

Best Friends—If you and your dog run together but think you're ready for stiffer competition than the squirrels, then head for the Unisphere, in Flushing Meadow Park, on June 10, for a race against other like-minded couples. The two-miler starts at 9, and the one-miler at 9:45. For more information, call 860-4455, ext. 225.

"Welcome Back to Brooklyn"—A street fair deluxe. Last year we ate soft ice cream, saw a man with a pet boa constrictor, and heard a steel-drum band. Grand Army Plaza. June 10, from noon to 5.

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES

EAST SIDE

ANGELIKA FILM CENTER, 18 W. Houston St. (995-2000)

Theatre 1: "Bail Jumper" (directed by Christian Faber).

Theatre 2: "The Cook, the Thief, His Wife & Her Lover" (†).

Theatre 3: "Longtime Companion" (†).

Theatre 4: "Last Exit to Brooklyn" (†).

Theatre 5: Through June 7: "Blue Velvet" (†). From June 8: "How to Make Love to a Negro Without Getting Tired" (Jacques W. Benoit; in French), with Isaach De Bankolé.

Theatre 6: The 22nd International Tournée of Animation.

PUBLIC THEATRE, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)

(Separate admissions) Five short films by Peter Greenaway; "A Zed and Two Noughts" (1986, Greenaway); and three films about Malcolm X.

MOVIELAND 8TH STREET TRIPLEX, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)

Theatre 1: "Q & A" (†).

Theatre 2: "Fire Birds" (David Green), with Nicolas Cage, Tommy Lee Jones, and Sean Young.

Theatre 3: "Total Recall" (Paul Verhoeven), with Arnold Schwarzenegger.

BIJOU CINEMA, 3rd Ave. between 12th and 13th. (505-7320)

"Wild Orchid" (Zalman King), with Mickey Rourke, Jacqueline Bisset, and Carré Otis.

LOEWS 19TH STREET EAST 6, B'way at 19th. (260-8000)

Theatre 1: "Total Recall" (Paul Verhoeven), with Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Theatre 2: (Separate admissions) "Q & A" (†); and "Total Recall."

Theatre 3: Through June 7: "Fire Birds" (David Green), with Nicolas Cage, Tommy Lee Jones, and Sean Young. From June 8: "Another 48 Hrs." (Walter Hill), with Eddie Murphy and Nick Nolte.

Theatre 4: "The Hunt for Red October" (John McTiernan), with Sean Connery, Alec Baldwin, Scott Glenn, Sam Neill, James Earl Jones, and Richard Jordan.

Theatre 5: "RoboCop" (†).

Theatre 6: "Cadillac Man" (†).

GRAMERCY, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)

"Pretty Woman" (†).

BAY CINEMA, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)

"Bird on a Wire" (†).

LOEWS 34TH STREET SHOWPLACE, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)

Theatre 1: "Q & A" (†).

Theatre 2: Through June 7: "Tales from the Darkside: The Movie" (John Harrison). From June 8: "Another 48 Hrs." (Walter Hill), with Eddie Murphy and Nick Nolte.

Theatre 3: "Cadillac Man" (†).

34TH ST. EAST, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)

"Back to the Future Part III" (Robert Zemeckis), with Michael J. Fox, Christopher Lloyd, and Mary Steenburgen.

EASTSIDE CINEMA, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)

Through June 7: "Q & A" (†).

From June 8: "Happily Ever After."

GOTHAM CINEMA, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)

"The War of the Roses" (†).

PLAZA, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)

"Strapless" (David Hare), with Blair Brown, Bruno Ganz, and Bridget Fonda.

MANHATTAN TWIN, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)

Theatre 1: "Wild Orchid" (Zalman King), with Mickey Rourke and Carré Otis.

Theatre 2: "Last Exit to Brooklyn" (†).

59TH STREET EAST CINEMA, 239 E. 59th. (759-4630)

"The Cook, the Thief, His Wife & Her Lover" (†).

BARONET AND CORONET, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)

Theatre 1: "Back to the Future Part III" (Robert Zemeckis), with Michael J. Fox, Christopher Lloyd, and Mary Steenburgen.

Theatre 2: "Back to the Future Part III."

CINEMA I, CINEMA II, AND CINEMA 3RD AVENUE, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)

Theatre 1: "Pretty Woman" (†).

Theatre 2: "Fire Birds" (David Green), with Nicolas Cage, Tommy Lee Jones, and Sean Young.

Theatre 3: "Torn Apart" (Jack Fisher), with Adrian Pasdar and Cecilia Peck.

GEMINI I AND 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)

Theatre 1: "Total Recall" (Paul Verhoeven), with Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Theatre 2: "Total Recall."

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FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 25.

Louise Brooks in "Pandora's Box"

BEEKMAN, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)

"Bird on a Wire" (†).

LOEWS NEW YORK TWIN, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)

Theatre 1: "The Hunt for Red October" (John McTiernan), with Sean Connery, Alec Baldwin, Scott Glenn, Sam Neill, James Earl Jones, Joss Ackland, and Richard Jordan.

Theatre 2: Through June 7: "A Show of Force" (Bruno Barreto), with Amy Irving, Andy Garcia, Lou Diamond Phillips, and Robert Duvall. From June 8: "Another 48 Hrs." (Walter Hill), with Eddie Murphy and Nick Nolte.

68TH ST. PLAYHOUSE, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)

"Monsieur Hire" (Patrice Leconte; in French), with Michel Blanc and Sandrine Bonnaire.

LOEWS TOWER EAST, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)

"Cadillac Man" (†).

U. A. EAST, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)

"Back to the Future Part III" (Robert Zemeckis), with Michael J. Fox, Christopher Lloyd, Mary Steenburgen, and Thomas F. Wilson.

PARK & 86TH STREET CINEMAS, 125 E. 86th. (534-1880)

Theatre 1: Through June 7: "Tales from the Darkside: The Movie" (John Harrison). From June 8: "Another 48 Hrs." (Walter Hill), with Eddie Murphy and Nick Nolte.

Theatre 2: Through June 7: (Matinées only) "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles" (†); and (evenings only) "House Party" (Reginald Hudlin), with Christopher Reid and Christopher Martin. From June 8: "Another 48 Hrs."

86TH STREET EAST TWIN, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)

Theatre 1: Through June 7: "Fire Birds" (David Green), with Nicolas Cage, Tommy Lee Jones, and Sean Young. From June 8: "Happily Ever After."

Theatre 2: "Pretty Woman" (†).

WEST SIDE

BLEECKER STREET CINEMA I AND 2, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)

Theatre 1: "Too Beautiful for You" (directed by Bertrand Blier; in French), with Gérard Depardieu, Josiane Balasko, and Carole Bouquet.

Theatre 2: (Separate admissions) "The Belly of an Architect" (1987, Peter Greenaway); and "Going Places" (1974, Bertrand Blier; in French), with Gérard Depardieu, Miou-Miou, and Patrick Dewaere.

WAVERLY I AND 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)

Theatre 1: "Bird on a Wire" (†).

Theatre 2: Through June 7: "Bird on a Wire" (†). From June 8: "Another 48 Hrs." (Walter Hill), with Eddie Murphy and Nick Nolte.

8TH ST. PLAYHOUSE, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515)

"Tie Me Up! Tie Me Down!" (†).

ART GREENWICH TWIN, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)

Theatre 1: "Back to the Future Part III" (Robert Zemeckis), with Michael J. Fox, Christopher Lloyd, and Mary Steenburgen.

Theatre 2: "Cadillac Man" (†).

QUAD CINEMA, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)

Theatre 1: "My Left Foot" (†).

Theatre 2: "Pretty Woman" (†).

Theatre 3: "Cinema Paradiso" (Giuseppe Tornatore; in Italian), with Philippe Noiret and Salvatore Cascio.

Theatre 4: "Without You I'm Nothing" (John Boskovich), with Sandra Bernhard.

CHELSEA CINEMAS, 260 W. 23rd. (691-4744)

Theatre 1: "Back to the Future Part III" (Robert Zemeckis), with Michael J. Fox, Christopher Lloyd, and Mary Steenburgen.

Theatre 2: "Strapless" (David Hare), with Blair Brown, Bruno Ganz, and Bridget Fonda.

Theatre 3: "Bird on a Wire" (†).

Theatre 4: "Last Exit to Brooklyn" (†).

Theatre 5: "The Cook, the Thief, His Wife & Her Lover" (†).

Theatre 6: "Longtime Companion" (†).

Theatre 7: "Bird on a Wire" (†).

Theatre 8: "Back to the Future Part III."

Theatre 9: "Back to the Future Part III."

23RD ST. WEST TRIPLEX, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)

Theatre 1: (Matinées only) "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles" (†); and (evenings only) "House Party" (Reginald Hudlin), with Christopher Reid and Christopher Martin.

Theatre 2: "Wild Orchid" (Zalman King), with Mickey Rourke, Jacqueline Bisset, and Carré Otis.

Theatre 3: "My Left Foot" (†).

GUILD, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)

"Pretty Woman" (†).

WORLDWIDE CINEMAS, 50th St. between 8th and 9th Aves. (246-1583)

Theatre 1: "My Left Foot" (†).

Theatre 2: "Back to the Future Part III" (Robert Zemeckis), with Michael J. Fox, Christopher Lloyd, and Mary Steenburgen.

Theatre 3: "Strapless" (David Hare), with Blair Brown, Bruno Ganz, and Bridget Fonda.

Theatre 4: "Last Exit to Brooklyn" (†).

Theatre 5: "The Cook, the Thief, His Wife & Her Lover" (†).

Theatre 6: "Without You I'm Nothing" (John Boskovich), with Sandra Bernhard.

ZIEGFELD, 141 W. 54th St. (765-7600)

"Bird on a Wire" (†).

FESTIVAL, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)

The 22nd International Tournée of Animation.

57TH ST. PLAYHOUSE, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)

Through June 7: "The Mahabharata" (Peter Brook).

From June 8: "How to Make Love to a Negro Without Getting Tired" (Jacques W. Benoit; in French), with Isaach De Bankolé.

CARNEGIE HALL CINEMA, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)

"Longtime Companion" (†).

CARNEGIE SCREENING ROOM, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (757-2131)

"Too Beautiful for You" (Bertrand Blier; in French), with Gérard Depardieu, Josiane Balasko, and Carole Bouquet.

PARIS, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)

"Jesus of Montreal" (Denys Arcand; in French), with Lothaire Bluteau.

CINEMA 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)

"Henry V" (†).

MOVIE HOUSES—Cont'd

Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070) "Cadillac Man" (†).

62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd. (265-7466) "Last Exit to Brooklyn" (†).

Lincoln Plaza 1, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "Tie Me Up! Tie Me Down!" (†).
Theatre 2: "Cinema Paradiso" (Giuseppe Tornatore; in Italian), with Philippe Noiret and Salvatore Cascio.
Theatre 3: "Tie Me Up! Tie Me Down!" (†).

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700) "Bird on a Wire" (†).

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: "RoboCop" (†).
Theatre 2: Through June 7: "Fire Birds" (David Green), with Nicolas Cage, Tommy Lee Jones, and Sean Young. From June 8: "Another 48 Hrs." (Walter Hill), with Eddie Murphy and Nick Nolte.
Theatre 3: "Pretty Woman" (†).
Theatre 4: "Q & A" (†).
Theatre 5: "Total Recall" (Paul Verhoeven), with Arnold Schwarzenegger.
Theatre 6: "Total Recall."

Metro Cinema 1 and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Theatre 1: "Back to the Future Part III" (Robert Zemeckis), with Michael J. Fox, Christopher Lloyd, and Mary Steenburgen.
Theatre 2: "Back to the Future Part III."

Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: (Matinées only) "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles" (†); and (evenings only) "House Party" (Reginald Hudlin).
Theatre 2: "The Hunt for Red October" (John McTiernan), with Sean Connery and Alec Baldwin.

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: "Total Recall" (directed by Paul Verhoeven), with Arnold Schwarzenegger.
Theatre 2: "Class of 1999" (Mark L. Lester), with Bradley Gregg.
Theatre 3: "The Guardian" (William Friedkin), with Carey Lowell, Dwier Brown, and Jenny Seagrove.
Theatre 4: "Q & A" (†).
Theatre 5: Through June 7: "The Game." From June 8: "Happily Ever After."
Theatre 6: "Total Recall."

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (302-0494) "Fire Birds" (David Green), with Nicolas Cage, Tommy Lee Jones, and Sean Young.

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 2: "The Hunt for Red October" (John McTiernan), with Sean Connery and Alec Baldwin.
Theatre 3: "The First Power" (Robert Resnikoff), with Lou Diamond Phillips.
Theatre 4: "RoboCop" (†).

Loews Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)
Through June 7: "Tales from the Darkside: The Movie" (John Harrison).
From June 8: "Another 48 Hrs." (Walter Hill), with Eddie Murphy and Nick Nolte.

National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: "Back to the Future Part III" (Robert Zemeckis), with Michael J. Fox, Christopher Lloyd, and Mary Steenburgen.
Theatre 2: "Back to the Future Part III."

Warner, 7th Ave. between 42nd and 43rd. (764-6760) "Wild Orchid" (Zalman King), with Mickey Rourke, Jacqueline Bisset, and Carré Otis.

West Side Cinema 1 and 2, 7th Ave. at 48th. (398-1720)
Theatre 1: Through June 7: (Separate admissions) "Hard to Kill" (Bruce Malmuth), with Steven Seagal; and "Impulse" (Sondra Locke), with Theresa Russell and Jeff Fahey. From June 8: "How to Make Love to a Negro Without Getting Tired" (Jacques W. Benoit), with Isaach De Bankolé.
Theatre 2: "Henry: Portrait of a Serial Killer" (†).

REVIVAL HOUSES

Biograph Cinema, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582) The 1990 New York International Festival of Lesbian and Gay Film.

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
Through June 5: "Rio Bravo" (1959, directed by Howard Hawks), with John Wayne, Dean Martin, Ricky Nelson, Walter Brennan, and Angie Dickinson; and "The Searchers" (1956, John Ford), with Wayne, Natalie Wood, Jeffrey Hunter, Vera Miles, and Ward Bond.
June 6-7: "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof" (1958, Richard Brooks), with Elizabeth Taylor, Paul Newman, and Burl Ives; and "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?" (1966, Mike Nichols), with Taylor, Richard Burton, George Segal, and Sandy Dennis.
June 8-9: "Raging Bull" (1980, Martin Scorsese), with Robert De Niro, Cathy Moriarty, and Joe Pesci; and "Taxi Driver" (†).
June 10: "Pandora's Box" (†); and "Beggars of Life."
June 11-12: "Stage Fright" (1950, Alfred Hitchcock), with Jane Wyman, Marlene Dietrich, Richard Todd, and Michael Wilding; and "I Confess" (1953, Hitchcock), with Montgomery Clift, Anne Baxter, Karl Malden, and Brian Aherne.
From June 13: "Repo Man" (†); and "Nothing Lasts Forever."

Thalia SoHo, 15 Vandam St. (675-0498)
Through June 5: "Breathless" (1959, Jean-Luc Godard; in French), with Jean Seberg and Jean-Paul Belmondo; and "Band of Outsiders" (1964, Godard; in French), with Anna Karina, Sami Frey, and Charles Brasseur.
June 6-7: "Breathless"; and "Pierrot le Fou" (1965, Jean-Luc Godard; in French), with Jean-Paul Belmondo and Anna Karina.
June 8-9: "Breathless"; and "Made in U.S.A." (1967, Jean-Luc Godard; in French), with Anna Karina.
June 10: "La Terra Trema" (†) and "The Innocent" (†).
June 11-12: "Reporters" (1981, Raymond Depardon), a documentary; and "Faits Divers" (1983, Depardon), a documentary.
From June 13: "And Then There Were None" (†); and "Death on the Nile" (1978, John Guillermin), with Peter Ustinov as Agatha Christie's Hercule Poirot.

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)
June 4: "Love Is a Funny Thing" (1970, Claude Lelouch; in French), with Jean-Paul Belmondo and Annie Girardot; and "Live for Life" (1967, Lelouch; in French), with Yves Montand and Candice Bergen.
June 5: "Take the Money and Run" (1969, Woody Allen), with Allen and Janet Margolin; and "Bananas" (1971, Allen), with Allen.
June 6: "Dragonwyck" (1946, Joseph L. Mankiewicz), with Gene Tierney, Vincent Price, Walter Huston, and Glenn Langan; and "My Cousin Rachel" (1952, Henry Koster), with Olivia de Havilland and Richard Burton.
June 7: "A Slight Case of Murder" (†); and "Arsenic and Old Lace" (1944, Frank Capra), with Cary Grant, Priscilla Lane, Raymond Massey, Peter Lorre, Josephine Hull, and Jean Adair.
June 8-9: "The Trial" (†); and "The Third Man" (1950, Carol Reed), with Welles, Joseph Cotten, Alida Valli, and Trevor Howard.
June 10: "Breakfast at Tiffany's" (†) and "Roman Holiday" (†).
June 11: "Osaka Elegy" (1936) and "Sisters of the Gion" (1936), both in Japanese, directed by Kenji Mizoguchi.
June 12: "Odd Man Out" (†) and "Outcast of the Islands" (†).
June 13: "Harold and Maude" (1971, Hal Ashby), with Ruth Gordon and Bud Cort; and "Where's Poppa?" (1970, Carl Reiner), with George Segal, Gordon, Trish Van Devere, and Ron Leibman.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490)

Theatre 1: June 4 at 2:30: "McCabe & Mrs. Miller" (1971, directed by Robert Altman), with Warren Beatty, Julie Christie, René Auberjonois, Keith Carradine, and Shelley Duvall. . . . ¶ June 4 at 6: "Red Psalm" (1972, Miklos Jancso). . . . ¶ June 5 at 2:30: "The Conversation" (1974, Francis Ford Coppola), with Gene Hackman, John Cazale, and Allen Garfield. . . . ¶ June 5 at 6: "Mean Streets" (1973, Martin Scorsese), with Harvey Keitel and Robert De Niro. . . . ¶ June 7 at 2:30: "Red Psalm." . . . ¶ June 7 at 6: "The Conversation." . . . ¶ June 9 at 2: "A Familiar Face" (1929, Nikolai Shpikovsky; a Russian silent film). . . . ¶ June 9 at 5: "Goodbye, Boys" (1966, Mikhail Kulik; in Russian). . . . ¶ June 10 at 2: "New Babylon" (1929, Grigori Kozintsev and Leonid Trauberg; a Russian silent film). . . . ¶ June 10 at 5: "Spring" (1929, Mikhail Kaufman; a Russian silent film) and "Two-Buldi-Two" (1929, Lev Kuleshov; a Russian silent film). . . . ¶ June 11 at 2:30: "Goodbye, Boys." . . . ¶ June 11 at 6: "A Familiar Face." . . . ¶ June 12 at 2:30: "The Jew on the Land" (1926, Abram Room; a Russian silent film) and "Frontier" (1936, Mikhail Dubson; in Russian). . . . ¶ June 12 at 6: "New Babylon."

Theatre 2: June 4 at 6:30: "The Dead Man" (1989) and "Martina's Playhouse" (1989), both by Peggy Ahwesh, who will be present. . . . ¶ June 5 at 3 and 6: "Victoria the Great" (1937, Herbert Wilcox), with Anna Neagle, Anton Walbrook, and H. B. Warner. . . . ¶ June 7 at 3 and 6: "Hard Life: A Parable for the Nuclear Age" (1985, Dennis O'Rourke), a documentary. . . . ¶ June 8 at 3 and 6: "Sequences" (1982, Alexandru Tatos; in Romanian). . . . ¶ June 9 at 2:30: "Back and Forth" (1969, Michael Snow) and "Serene Velocity" (1970, Ernie Gehr). . . . ¶ June 9 at 5: "Chronicle" (1970, Mark Rappoport) and "8½ x 11" (1974, James Benning). . . . ¶ June 10 at 3: "La Région Centrale" (1971, Snow). . . . ¶ June 11 at 3: "Chronicle" and "8½ x 11." . . . ¶ June 11 at 6: "Back and Forth" and "Serene Velocity."

Museum of Broadcasting, 1 E. 53rd St. (752-7684)—"Laurence Olivier: The Television Legacy." June 5-9: "Laurence Olivier—A Life" (1982, Bob Bee), a two-and-a-half-hour documentary. Showings Tuesday at 2:30 and 5:30, Wednesday through Friday at 2:30, and Saturday at 1. . . . ¶ "The Reiner Moritz Collection." June 5-9: "Mats Ek's Giselle" (1987, Maans Reuterswaard), a documentary. Showings Tuesday at 2 and 6:30 and Wednesday through Saturday at 2. . . . From June 12: "L'Enfant et les Sortileges" (1986, Hans Hulscher), featuring Jiri Kylian's Nederlands Dans Theatre. Showings Tuesday at 2 and 6:20 and Wednesday through Saturday at 2. . . . From June 12: "Cendrillon" (1989, Reuterswaard), performed by the Lyon Opera Ballet. Showings Tuesday through Saturday at 3:15.

American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria. (1-718 784-0077)—Films showing in the Riklis Theatre. June 9-10 at 2 and 4:30 and June 13 at 2:30: Four different programs of short comedies, 1925-1935, featuring Harry Langdon, W. C. Fields, Our Gang, ZaSu Pitts, and others.

Anthology Film Archives, 32-34 Second Ave., at Second St. (477-2714)—Films showing in either the Jonas Mekas Theatre or the Maya Deren Theatre. June 4 at 7: "A City of Sadness" (1989, Huo Hsiao-hsien). . . . ¶ June 6 at 7: "Tom, Tom, the Piper's Son" (1969, Ken Jacobs). . . . ¶ June 7 at 7 and June 8 at 9: "A Woman Under the Influence" (1975, John Cassavetes), with Gena Rowlands and Peter Falk. . . . ¶ June 7 at 7 and June 9-10 at 5: "My Dinner with Abbie" (1989, Nancy Cohen) and "Self Portrait" (1980, Jonas Mekas). . . . ¶ June 7 at 9, June 8 at 7, June 9 at 9, and June 10 at 7: Eight short films by British filmmakers. . . . ¶ June 7 at 9:30, June 8 at 7, and June 10 at 7:30: "Miracle Mile" (1989, Steve DaJarnatt), with Anthony Edwards and Mare Winningham. . . . ¶ June 8 at 9: Five films by Piero Heliczer. . . . ¶ June 9 at 9 and June 10 at 5: "Love Streams" (1984, Cassavetes), with Cassavetes and Rowlands. . . . ¶ June 10 at 4: "The Making of 'Husbands'" (1971, Tristram Powell), a documentary. . . . ¶ June 13 at 7: A program of films by Peter Kubelka. . . . ¶ June 13 at 9: A program of short films by Georges Méliès.

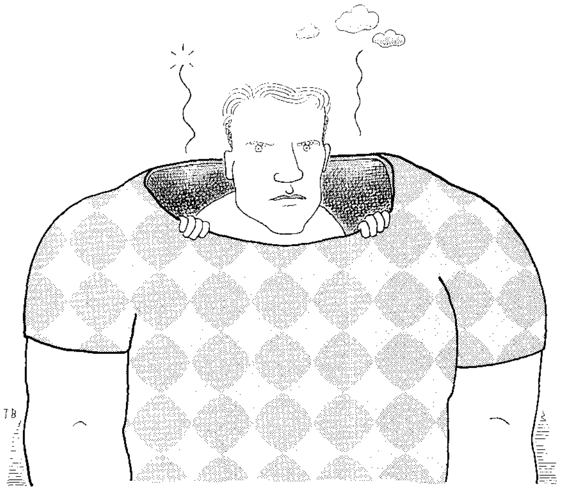
Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St. (752-3015)—A program of films on which Takeo Kimura worked as art director. June 4 at 6:30: "The Death of a Tea Master" (1989, Kei Kumai; in Japanese). . . . ¶ June 8 at 6:30: "Zipang" (1990, Kaizo Hayashi; in Japanese). . . . ¶ June 11 at 6: "Tampopo" (1985, Juzo Itami; in Japanese), with Nobuko Miyamoto and Tsutomu Yamazaki; and "Preparation for the Festival" (1975, Kazuo Kuroki; in Japanese).

Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—June 6 at 12:30, 4:30, and 8:30: "Children of Paradise" (1945, Marcel Carné; in French), with Jean-Louis Barrault, Arletty, Pierre Brasseur, and Maria Casarès. . . . ¶ June 13 at 12:30 and 6: "Under the Roots of Paris" (1930, René Clair; in French), with Albert Préjean, Pola Illery, Gaston Modot, and Edmond Gréville. . . . ¶ June 13 at 3:15 and 8:45: "Le Million" (1931, Clair; in French), with René Lefèvre, Annabella, Louis Allibert, and Wanda Gréville.

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.

IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.



Arnold Schwarzenegger, now in "Total Recall"

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael and Terrence Rafferty.)

And Then There Were None (1945)—The Agatha Christie murder mystery and play "Ten Little Indians" (known in England as "Ten Little Niggers") gathers together a group of characters and then ticks them off to the nursery rhyme. Ten people are invited to spend a weekend on an island by a host none of them knows; on arrival, they are notified by phonograph that their host, in absentia, is going to punish them for various crimes they have committed, and they start keeling over like plague victims. This René Clair version isn't exactly full of life to start with, despite the cast—Judith Anderson, June Duprez, Roland Young, Walter Huston, Mischa Auer, Barry Fitzgerald, Richard Haydn, Louis Hayward, C. Aubrey Smith, Queenie Leonard, and Harry Thurston. The efforts at sprightly, stylish comedy don't gain momentum.—P.K. (Thalia SoHo; starting June 13.)

Bird on a Wire—Goldie Hawn being crushingly cute.—P.K. (Bay Cinema, Beekman, Waverly, Chelsea Cinemas, Ziegfeld, and Regency.)

Blue Velvet (1986)—Written and directed by David Lynch, this is possibly the only coming-of-age movie in which sex has the danger and the heightened excitement of a horror picture. The charged erotic atmosphere makes the film something of a trance-out, but Lynch's humor keeps breaking through, too. His fantasies may come from his unconscious, but he recognizes them for what they are, and he's tickled by them. The film is consciously purplish and consciously funny, and the two work together in an original, down-home way. The setting is an archetypal small, sleepy city in an indefinite mythic present that feels like the past, and Kyle MacLachlan is Jeffrey, the clean-cut young man who's scared of his dirty thoughts (but wants to have them anyway). He commutes between the blue lady of the night (Isabella Rosselini, who's a dream of a freak) and the sunshine girl he loves (Laura Dern). The movie has so much aural-visual humor and poetry that it's sustained despite the wobbly plot and other weaknesses. Lynch skimps on commercial-movie basics and fouls up on them, too. But his use of irrational material works the way it's supposed to: at some not fully conscious level we read his images. With Dennis Hopper, who gives the movie a jolt of horrific energy, and Dean Stockwell, who is a smiling wonder as Ben the sandman. Also with Hope Lange, Priscilla Pointer, Brad Dourif, and Jack Nance. The score is by Angelo Badalamenti.—P.K. (Angelika Film Center; through June 7.)

Breakfast at Tiffany's (1961)—Audrey Hepburn's Holly Golightly is a tad refined for a girl who lives so improvisationally (on the money men give her), but for about the first three-quarters of an hour this picture, directed by Blake Edwards, has a fair amount of sophisticated slapstick comedy, especially at a cocktail party that ranks with the best screen parties of the era. If you've read the Truman Capote novella that the movie is based on (and even if you haven't), you may be dismayed to see things go soft and romantic. The film wanders, and Hepburn is forced to become too frail and too enchantingly raffish before it comes to its makeshift, fairy-tale end. The madcap Holly, with her attachment to a writer (George Peppard) whose apartment is just below hers, is, of course, very similar to Sally Bowles with her Isherwood, except that the setting here is New York and not Berlin. Patricia Neal is amusing in the rather impenetrable role of an interior decorator who appears to be a lesbian but is also keeping Peppard. (It may be wise not to let the mind linger too long over that.) Mickey Rooney does a wild bit of racial caricature as the Japanese photographer who lives in the apartment above Holly's; it's the most lowdown and daring thing in the movie. The cast includes Buddy Ebsen and John McGiver. The script is by George Axelrod; Hepburn's clothes are by Givenchy and Neal's are by Pauline Trigère.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; June 10.)

Cadillac Man—This shaggy comedy about a Queens auto salesman is full of small, accidental-seeming pleasures—the joys of resourcefulness. It's a movie of bits and pieces, a patchwork of motions and wayward inspirations, and it probably shouldn't work at all. But it's more than funny enough to wear down our resistance. The screenwriter, Ken Friedman, has peopled his story with more than a dozen vivid characters, and the director, Roger Donaldson, has given the actors plenty of room; everyone in this movie makes an impression. As the salesman, Joey O'Brien, Robin Williams is brilliant throughout, and he's surrounded by strong actors in sharply written roles—each one gives him something different to react to. Joey, whose passions are sex and selling, has an ex-wife, a teen-age daughter, and two girlfriends; he owes twenty thousand dollars to a mobster; and he's in danger of losing his job. All the characters are making demands on him, and, good salesman that he is, he does his best to satisfy them. Fran Drescher is hilarious as one of the girlfriends, Joy: she combines sexy wheedling and flat-out nagging in a completely original way. And Pamela Reed, as Joey's ex-wife, is splendid. Funniest of all is Tim Robbins, who plays Larry, the jealous husband of the dealership's receptionist (Annabella Sciorra); halfway through the picture, he drives his motorcycle through the showroom's plate-glass window and takes everyone hostage. Robbins's acting is explosive—totally unpredictable; watching the way he moves and listening to how he reads his lines, we keep asking ourselves, "Where did *that* come from?" Wherever this performance comes from, it's sensational. Also with Lori Petty, Paul Guilfoyle, Zack Norman, Lauren Tom, and Elaine Stritch.—T.R. (Reviewed in our issue of 6/4/90.) (Loews 19th Street East 6, Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews Tower East, Art Greenwich Twin, and Loews Paramount.)

The Cook, the Thief, His Wife & Her Lover—A movie about a crude British thug, Albert Spica (Michael Gambon), whose favorite method of terrorizing people is ramming things down their throats. Albert himself eats only haute cuisine; he and his wife (Helen Mirren) dine every night at a posh restaurant called Le Hollandais. This is an Art Movie, refined and terribly formal; the director, Peter Greenaway (who also wrote the script), places this barbarian smack in the middle of "painterly" compositions and encourages us to see him as a steaming hunk of offal desecrating the beauty of an artist's creation. He looks at Albert with the disdainful stare that the pukka sahib directs at a servant who has inconvenienced him. Greenaway, however, has a lot more in common with his loutish protagonist than he thinks. He obviously regards himself as an aesthetic virtuoso, but he's just a cultural omnivore. (He chews with his mouth open—we can identify almost every piece of art that has fed his imagination.) The only thing in this movie's tidy, hermetic universe that Greenaway is unable to control, or disguise with fancy brushwork, is his loathing of the body. The movie features several gross-out scenes, including a climactic act of cannibalism; the Motion Picture Association of America gave it an X rating. (The distributors released it unrated.) What's offensive about the picture, though, isn't its violence or its visceral shocks but the patrician arrogance, the smug aestheticism, the snobbishness that suffuse every frame. Greenaway is an intellectual bully: he pushes us to the ground and kicks art in our faces. Also with Alan Howard (the Lover) and Richard Bohringer (the Cook). Cinematography by Sacha Vierny.—T.R. (5/7/90) (Angelika Film Center, 59th Street East Cinema, Chelsea Cinemas, and Worldwide Cinemas.)

Henry V—Adapted and directed by its young star, Kenneth Branagh, this fast-paced version isn't exultant, like the one made forty-five years earlier by Laurence Olivier. Branagh emphasizes the price paid for war: the bloodshed. And, in keeping with his generation's supposed disillusion with war, he minimizes the play's glorification of the English fighting man. His conception of how to film the play is to look closely at the conniving, the misgivings, the ego wars. (This epic noir doesn't indicate why the French lost at Agincourt.) Branagh is not an overnight great moviemaker; his attempts at spectacular effects strain his inventiveness. But as an actor he has something of James Cagney's confident Irishness; he's intensely likable, with a beautiful, expressive voice and a straightforwardness that drives the whole film ahead. He and the other performers are so up that you feel their pride in working on true dramatic poetry. It's a company of stars: Paul Scofield as the melancholy French king whose face foretells the doom of his army, Christopher Ravenscroft as the herald Mountjoy, Derek Jacobi as the Chorus, Judi Dench as Mistress Quickly, Robbie Coltrane as Falstaff, Brian Blessed as Exeter, Richard Briers as Bardolph, Richard Easton as the Constable of France, Alec McCowen as Ely, Robert Stephens as Pistol, Emma Thompson as Katherine, Geraldine McEwan as Alice, Christian Bale as Falstaff's boy, and, best of all, perhaps, Ian Holm as the chattering Welshman Fluellen.—P.K. (11/27/89) (Cinema 3.)

Henry: Portrait of a Serial Killer—This low-budget independent feature, originally made for the home-video market, has a stark, relentless quality that is sometimes mistaken for art. Like Leonard Kastle's "The Honeymoon Killers" (1970), it's a deliberately flat, affectless treatment of gruesome true-crime material. (It's loosely based on the criminal career of a mass murderer named Henry Lee Lucas.) The movie's Henry (Michael Rooker) is a beefy, moronic-looking lug who lives in a miserable apartment with a creep named Otis (played, by Tom Towles, in a style that suggests a syphilitic Warren Oates) and Otis's sister, Becky (Tracy Arnold). Every now and then, Henry gets a sort of funny look in his eyes and goes out to kill somebody. Eventually, he starts taking Otis along, and Otis has a whale of a time; for a while, they videotape their exploits and watch them at home afterward. "Henry" plays like a hybrid of "Blood Feast" and "Stranger Than Paradise"; it mixes gore-movie carnage with Jarmusch-style aimless minimalism. Sure, it's compelling; the nature of the material guarantees that. But it doesn't seem to be telling us much more than that the world is a scary place and murder is ugly. We knew those things. This is tabloid chic. The screenplay is by John McNaughton and Richard Fire; McNaughton directed.—T.R. (4/23/90) (West Side Cinema.)

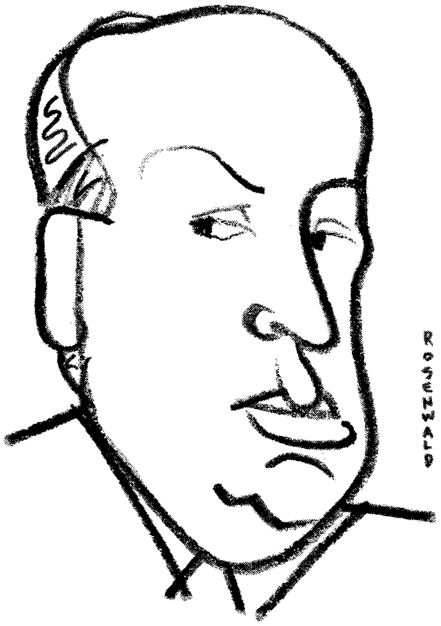
The Innocent (1976)—For its first half, this Visconti film, based on the 1892 D'Annunzio novel, is a steamy comedy of manners that seems an almost perfect preparation for a tragicomedy of jealousy, and Visconti's work is masterly in its expressive turn-of-the-century décor and in its control. Tullio (Giancarlo Giannini), an aristocratic liberal, has become sexually indifferent to his innocent, round-cheeked, country-mousy wife (Laura Antonelli) and has turned to a liaison with an ardent, glittering countess (Jennifer O'Neill). But when his gentle wife becomes interested in another man, he falls passionately in love with her. In the second half, the picture runs out of steam and turns into a ponderous melodrama. Giannini is far from ideally cast, but he seems acceptable until he remembers to act; toward the end he's all over the place acting. Antonelli gives the picture some amusing sexual suspense. At first, she's like a placid ingénue, except that she has furtive yearnings—naughty thoughts. When she's finally nude, in bed, and aroused, she heaves and writhes so prodigiously she's like a storm-tossed sea. It's the kind of passion you learn in a circus: she's a horizontal belly dancer. Visconti had finished shooting this film when he died in 1976, but he did not complete the editing, and perhaps the maundering second half is partly the fault of others. With Marie Dubois as the Princess, Marc Porel as the novelist, Rina Morelli as Tullio's mother, Claude Mann as the Prince, and Massimo Girotti and Didier Haudepin. From a script by Susi Cecchi D'Amico, Enrico Medioli, and Visconti. In Italian.—P.K. (Thalia SoHo; June 10.)

Last Exit to Brooklyn—A reverent, lugubrious adaptation of the famous 1965 book by Hubert Selby, Jr. Selby's stories about dead lives in a working-class Brooklyn neighborhood were presented in the book as discrete vignettes of urban alienation, linked only by their common air of desperation and the nervous bebop rhythms of the prose. The screenwriter, Desmond Nakano, and the director, Uli Edel, have done a cut-and-paste job on the material, so all the sad tales now unfold simultaneously. The movie jumps from one unhappy character to another as they proceed toward their climactic martyrdoms, low-life Christ figures racing each other up Calvary. And although the picture was mostly filmed on location, it rarely looks as if it were taking place in America: the filmmakers seem to have missed their exit and wound up in some never-never land of romanticized wretchedness—a disenchanted forest. Most of the actors are ground down by the film's maudlin, heavy spirit; only Jennifer Jason Leigh, as a young streetwalker, and Jerry Orbach, in the small role of a union leader, manage to resemble actual human beings. Also with Stephen Lang, Burt Young, and Alexis Arquette.—T.R. (Angelika Film Center, Manhattan Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, Worldwide Cinemas, and 62nd & Broadway.)

Longtime Companion—The screenwriter, Craig Lucas, and the director, Norman René, track the effects of AIDS on the lives of eight people: seven gay men and a straight woman who is a lifelong friend of one of the men. The filmmakers focus on one day in each year of the epidemic, from 1981 through 1989, and the mournful progress of the decade is expressed by the gaps between the annual episodes: the cast of characters keeps getting smaller, and at the end only the woman and three of the men are left. The movie is sometimes very effective, but it's often blander and more simplistic than it should be. It seems determined to convey a wholesome, "normal" image of gay life to straight America—so all its characters are pleasant and good-looking, and they're all white, too. The only really interesting characters are a middle-aged couple, David (Bruce Davison) and Sean (Mark Lamos). The natural protagonist of the drama is David, who, when Sean gets sick, cares for him with extraordinary patience and tenderness. Davison's performance (in probably the best role he has ever had) is wonderfully dry and precise. There's a strange reserve in his demeanor even when he's being goofy, so the strength he shows at the bedside of his dying lover is both heartbreaking and absolutely convincing. It's a well-written role, and Davison does a beautiful piece of acting. After he, too, disappears—between episodes—the movie seems to have lost the best part of itself. Also with Campbell Scott, Stephen Caffrey, Patrick Cassidy, Mary-Louise Parker, John Dossett, and Dermot Mulroney.—T.R. (5/21/90) (Angelika Film Center, Chelsea Cinemas, and Carnegie Hall Cinema.)

My Left Foot—The greatness of Daniel Day-Lewis's performance as the Dubliner Christy Brown, a victim of cerebral palsy who became a painter and a writer, is that he pulls you inside Christy's frustration and rage (and his bottomless thirst). There's nothing soft or maudlin about this movie's view of Christy: he's anguished and locked in, yet excitingly insolent. The movie may tear you apart, but it's the story of a triumphantly tough guy who lived it up, and Day-Lewis's interpretation has some of the sexual seductiveness that was so startling in Olivier's Richard III. This is the first film of the Irish playwright-director Jim Sheridan, who wrote the superb screenplay with another Irish playwright, Shane Connaughton. With Brenda Fricker, Ray McAnally, Fiona Shaw, Ruth McCabe, and Hugh O'Conor playing Christy as a child.—P.K. (10/2/89) (Quad Cinema, 23rd St. West Triplex, and Worldwide Cinemas.)

Odd Man Out (1946)—Wounded at noon, the Irish rebel Johnny MacQueen (James Mason) stumbles through the streets of Belfast until midnight—the object of an intense, widespread manhunt. The tormented, delirious man, bleeding to death, seeks (but does not find) refuge on his way to the grave. Despite the reservations we may feel about his final denunciation of a world without charity, it's a memorable scene. Though the director, Carol Reed, doesn't quite succeed in creating a masterpiece (the inflated ideas in the script don't allow him to), there are bravura visual passages, the sound is often startlingly effective, and the film provides an experience that can't be shrugged off. Mason isn't only a resourceful actor; he's also a superb camera subject, and Reed and the cinematographer, Robert Krasker, draw us so close to his Johnny MacQueen that we want to save him to save ourselves. With Kathleen Ryan, W. G. Fay, Maureen Delany, Denis O'Dea, F. J. McCormick, William Hartnell, Dan O'Herlihy, Fay Compton, Cyril Cusack, and, regrettably, Robert Newton, in a badly misconceived performance in a badly misconceived role—the drunken mad painter Lukey. From F. L. Green's novel, adapted by Green and R. C. Sherriff.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; June 12.)



An Alfred Hitchcock double bill at the Cinema Village

An Outcast of the Island (1951)—A marvellous film (drawn from Joseph Conrad's work) that relatively few people have seen. It's probably the only movie that has ever attempted to deal in a complex way with the subject of the civilized man's ambivalence about the savage. It also contains some of the most remarkable sequences ever filmed by the director, Carol Reed; it's an uneven movie, but with splendid moments throughout. Trevor Howard is superb as Willems, who makes himself an outcast first through contemptible irresponsibility and through betrayal of those who trust him, and finally and hopelessly when, against his will, he is attracted to the silent, primitive girl, the terrifying Aissa (played by Kerima). Willems is wrong in almost everything he does, but he represents a gesture toward life; his enemy, Almayer (Robert Morley), is so horribly, pathetically stuffy that his family unit (with Wendy Hiller as his wife and Annabel Morley as his child) is absurdly, painfully funny.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; June 12.)

Pandora's Box (1928)—Louise Brooks, a great—almost impersonal—beauty with straight hair and bangs, left Hollywood in 1928, at the height of her career, and went to Germany for the role of a lifetime. G. W. Pabst had selected her to play Lulu in this film, adapted from the Wedekind plays "Erdgeist" and "Die Büchse der Pandora" (the same source material that Alban Berg used for his opera "Lulu"). Pabst, one of the giants of the screen, is perhaps most famous for his treatment of sex, violence, and abnormal psychology, and Wedekind's sex tragedy provided startling material. Lulu is the sexually insatiable female, the archetype of voracious, destructive woman. She has no moral sense and no interests beyond sensuality; when a man is exhausted, she leaves him. The film is episodic; it's in an Expressionistic style, with rapid cutting and surprising kinds of almost violent visual tension, particularly in the first half. For sheer erotic dynamism, the backstage scenes on the opening night of a show Lulu is in have never been equalled; the later scenes, in Marseilles, are comparatively drab. Moving through the chiaroscuro, Louise Brooks, with her straight back and strong shoulders, seems to have her own form of sexuality—preconscious yet intuitively all-knowing. She's like a cool, beautiful, innocently deadly cat that people can't keep their hands off. With Fritz Kortner as Dr. Schön, Francis Lederer as his son, Alice Roberts as the lesbian Countess Geschwitz, and Gustav Diessl as Jack the Ripper. Adaptation by Ladislaus Vajda. The German censors made extensive cuts in the film (Brooks indicated that they cut about fifteen minutes); a reconstituted version was assembled a half-century later. Silent.—P.K. (Cinema Village; June 10.)

Pretty Woman—The lovers in this romantic comedy, directed by Garry Marshall, are a long-legged, golden-hearted Hollywood Boulevard hooker (Julia Roberts) and a cold, suave corporate raider (Richard Gere). He buys her tasteful (expensive) clothes and shows her how to act "classy"; she opens—in order—his wallet, his fly, and his heart. The only real distinction of this long and rather uneventful diversion is the radical contrast between the stars' performing styles. Roberts is all ebullience and scattershot charm. The kind word for Gere's style is minimal. He's opaque, stubbornly remote; he seems to have faxed his performance in. At its worst, the movie is just unimaginative; at its best, it's pleasant and competent. It's business-as-usual entertainment. Also with Jason Alexander, Laura San Giacomo, Ralph Bellamy, and Hector Elizondo. The screenplay is by J. F. Lawton.—T.R. (Gramercy, Cinema I, 86th Street East Twin, Quad Cinema, Guild, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex.)

Q & A—Sidney Lumet has made some exciting, dramatic New York movies ("Serpico," "Dog Day Afternoon"). He also made the hard-to-sit-through "Prince of the City," a murky indictment of big-city graft, which he co-scripted. This is in the same mode: it's about the city's ethnic humor and anger, and about police corruption. Lumet wrote the script alone, and he's so busy laying on the rancorous, bantering atmosphere that he waits too long to get to the plot; the movie becomes torpid. (You have to concentrate to figure out what's supposed to be going on—that's the only suspense.) Nick Nolte, in dark hair that makes him look like a vampire, is a big, bulky Irish cop with a vicious streak; a repressed homosexual, he especially enjoys intimidating and murdering transvestites. The co-star is Timothy Hutton as an assistant D.A., also Irish, who's expected to cover up one of the cop's killings. But the standout performance is given by Luis Guzman as a Hispanic police detective who's pressured to be "dirty." Also with Patrick O'Neal, Armand Assante, Lee Richardson, Charles Dutton, Jenny Lumet, Fyvush Finkel, Paul Calderon, and International Chrysis. Cinematography by Andrzej Bartkowiak; music

Is there a killer in the house?

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for Miss Marple.
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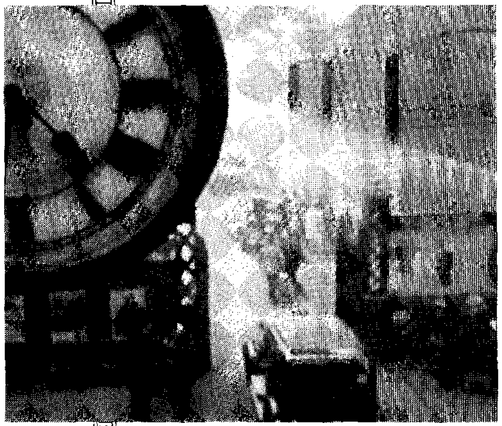
clues leads her to
a mansion full of
mysteries.



Can she connect a
murder witnessed
on a train, a curious
will, and a most
peculiar family?
Or will someone
else fall victim to
a murderer in their
midst?

**The
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Christie
Hour**

"4:50 from Paddington"

Mondays
at 9:00 PM ET

A&E

followed by
**Masters of
Mystery**
at 10:00 PM ET

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by Rubén Blades. *Based on the book by* Edwin Torres.—P.K. (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Loews 19th Street East 6, Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center. . . . ¶ Eastside *Cinema; through June 7.)*

Repo Man (1984)—The L.A. of freeways and off-ramps and squarish pastel-colored buildings that could be anything and could turn into something else overnight is the perfect *setting for a movie about men who take out* their frustrations by repossessing other people's cars. This low-budget fantasy gives you the feeling that you've gone past alienation into the land of detachment—a punkers' wasteland where you never know where you are, and nobody cares to make things work, and everybody you see is part of the lunatic fringe. The film takes off from Godard's "Weekend," with (probably) some help from Aldrich's "Kiss Me Deadly" and Zemeckis and Gale's "Used Cars," but its catatonic, shoo-fly humor is all its own. The young English writer-director Alex Cox keeps his dazed sociopaths speeding around—always on the periphery. There's nothing at the center. He has underhand ways of being funny, and the jokes don't often jump out at you—sometimes they barely peek out at all, because of the film's ramshackle ineptness. But the whole comic atmosphere of druggy burnout gets to you, and Cox never once slips—he never lets things get sentimentalized or organized. With Harry Dean Stanton, Emilio Estevez, Tracey Walter as the acidhead philosopher, Vonetta McGee as Marlene, and Fox Harris as a lobotomized scientist (who drives a 1964 Chevy Malibu, with a metallic-gold paint job). Robby Müller's cinematography sustains the flat grunginess of the conception; so does a song by the L.A. group The Circle Jerks.—P.K. (Cinema Village; starting June 13.)

In 1963, Orson Welles' version of Franz Kafka's "The Trial" (playing June 8-9 at Theatre 80 St. Marks) was widely damned as a mismatch of director and material, for predictable reasons. Kafka's parable of an inscrutable Law and the citizens it persecutes builds through rational arguments and mundane details, while Welles presents the saga of Joseph K., who wakes up one day to find himself under arrest, as an overscaled, uninterrupted trauma.

But the movie has nightmarish visual power and integrity, as well as originality. Welles starts by reading the allegory of the Law that Kafka saves for the penultimate chapter, illustrating it in pin-screen animation. By the time the police rouse Joseph K. from sleep, we've already grasped the futility of man's belief in justice. Welles knows what he's doing, just as he did when he began his movie of "Othello" by showing the tragic hero's funeral and Iago locked up in a cage. The filmmaker is immediately throwing off the constraints of fidelity and announcing his ambition to create variations on a theme.

"The Trial" is a New Wave movie made by an Old Master (who was, of course, only forty-eight in 1963). Welles intended to shoot the whole production in Yugoslavia. Instead, he was forced to film most of his interiors in a then abandoned Paris railroad station, the Gare d'Orsay. "The Trial" gains from the paradoxical immensity and claustrophobia of that location, which Welles fills with stylized corridors and rooms that function as chutes and traps. The soundtrack, sadly, is wretched, so most of the performers, including Anthony Perkins as K., must snag the audience with visual impressions alone. Still, "The Trial" is often jarring in the best sense. It's like Kafka staged in Godard's Alphaville.

RoboCop (1987)—In this punk sci-fi revenge *fantasy, the near future is played for deprav*ity, for kicks. Set in a Detroit of cloud-topped skyscrapers and a decaying older part of the city where rapists and vandals run wild and every day is open season on cops, the movie is shot in a deliberate sicko-sleazo comic-book style. (Body parts are treated as if they were auto-body parts.) When Murphy (Peter Weller), a young cop employed by the all-powerful conglomerate OCP, is blown apart by a gang of scummy sadists, OCP's scientists use his remains as part of a cyborg—an experimental model for an organic, automated cop that requires food but is virtually indestructible and is programmed to keep order. Part man, part tank, this virtuous knight in heavy metal clumps through the city. The picture keeps telling you that its leering brutishness is a terrific turn-on, and maybe it is if you're hooked on Wagnerian sci-fi comic books. The Dutch director, Paul Verhoeven, was nastily witty in "The 4th Man," but here, working in English, he doesn't have the timing or the spirit for that. This isn't gallows humor—it's just gallows pulp. As Murphy's woman-cop partner, Nan*cy Allen has the right soft tones to give the* movie a little differentiation; it makes sense that she would get through to RoboCop's human memory. (When he removes his steel hood, his tense, pained face has the *imaginative beauty that stirs audiences at classic horror films.)*—P.K. (Loews 19th Street East 6, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy.)

Roman Holiday (1953)—Charming. This is the picture that made Audrey Hepburn a movie star. Probably no one could have brought out her skinny, long-necked gamine magic as winningly as the director William Wyler did; his calm, elegant style prepares the scenes and builds the character until she has the audience in thrall, and when she smiles we're all goners. She plays a Central European princess on an official tour of Rome. The princess flies the royal coop and has her first experiences of freedom with an American reporter (Gregory Peck, who is at his most animated and likable) and his photographer-sidekick (Eddie Albert). The plot is banal, and the movie is no more than a Cinderella-style romantic comedy, but it's enough. *(Children adore this fairy tale about a mod*ern princess.) With Harcourt Williams, Hartley Power, Margaret Rawlings, and Tullio Carminati. The story is credited to Ian McLellan Hunter and the script to him and John Dighton, though Ben Hecht also worked on it at one stage, and Ennio Flaiano and Suso Cecchi d'Amico are said to have rewritten it for Wyler when he was in Rome.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; June 10.)

A Slight Case of Murder (1938)—A black farce in the manner of "Arsenic and Old Lace." It's a burlesque of gangster films, with Edward G. Robinson as a bootlegger who turns legitimate and forces one mortifying mess after another. He drives his family out for a weekend in a country house, and finds the corpses of four gangsters sitting around a table in the spare bedroom. Eventually, at a party back in town, the four are brought in and strung up on hooks in a closet. The director, Lloyd Bacon, succeeds in getting giggles out of some of these scenes, but his style is too broad, and the tone of the film is archly childish. With Allen Jenkins as a beer salesman, Jane Bryan, Bobby Jordan, Ruth Donnelly, Harold Huber, Edward Brophy, John Litel, and Willard Parker. From a play by Damon Runyon and Howard Lindsay, adapted by Earl Baldwin and Joseph Schrank.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; June 7.)

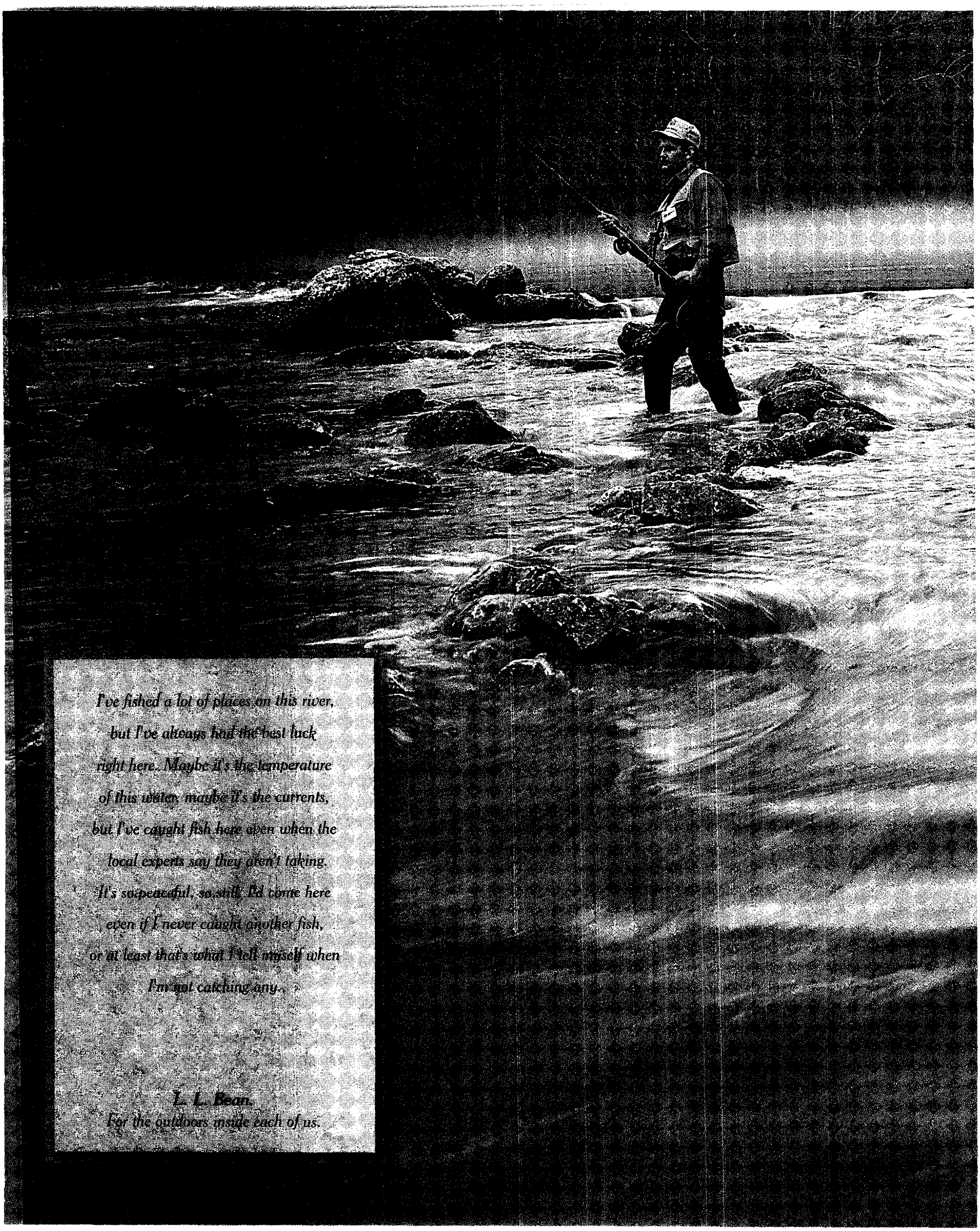
Taxi Driver (1976)—Robert De Niro is in almost every frame of Martin Scorsese's feverish, horrifyingly funny movie about a lonely New York cabdriver. De Niro's inflamed, brimming eyes are the focal point of the compositions. He's Travis Bickle, an outsider who can't find any point of entry into human society. He drives nights because he can't sleep anyway; surrounded by the night world of the uprooted—whores, pimps, transients—he hates New York with a Biblical fury, and its filth and smut obsess him. This ferociously powerful film is like a raw, tabloid version of "Notes from Underground." Scorsese achieves the quality of trance in some scenes, and the whole movie has a sense of vertigo. From Paul Schrader's script; with Harvey Keitel, Cybill Shepherd, Jodie Foster, Peter Boyle, Albert Brooks, and Scorsese himself.—P.K. (Cinema Village; June 8-9.)

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles—A tacky, light-*hearted parody of crime-wave movies*—camp for kiddies. As babies, the four turtles were let loose in radioactive muck; they mutated into hip, English-speaking people-size turtles who live in the dark sewers of New York City and send out for pizza. Their mentor, the wise old rat Splinter, has trained them in the martial arts, and they fight the criminal legions led by the Japanese, Darth Vader-like Shredder. Their human friends are the TV newswoman April O'Neil (Judith Hoag) and the daredevil Casey Jones (Elias Koteas). Everything in the movie has a playful, pop familiarity, and the jokey allusions to other movies are easy for young kids to grasp. The four turtles (stuntmen in getups devised by Jim Henson's Creature Shop) are not as individualized as one might hope, but Splinter has an Alice-in-Wonderland creepiness. The director, Steve Barron, is casual with Hoag and Koteas, who blend in gracefully; he can't do much for the preachy subplot involving a father and son who misunderstand each other. (The flashbacks are the most fun.) The story is based on the comic-book characters devised in 1983 by *Peter Laird and Kevin Eastman.—P.K.* (23rd St. West Triplex, and Olympia. Matinées only. . . . ¶ Park & 86th Street Cinemas; *through June 7, matinées only.)*

La Terra Trema (1947)—Luchino Visconti's *neorealist tragedy, set among the exploited* Sicilian fishermen, is long and full of political clichés, and yet in its solemnity and beauty it achieves a true epic vision. The film is lyrical yet austere, and it's beautifully proportioned. It may be the best boring movie ever made: although you might have to get up and stretch a few times, you're not likely to want to leave. Filmed on location in Aci-Trezza, Sicily. The assistant directors were Francesco Rosi and Franco Zeffirelli. The script is by Visconti. In Sicilian dialect.—P.K. (Thalia SoHo; June 10.)

Tie Me Up! Tie Me Down!—Pedro Almodóvar's new movie gets off to a fast start, like a windup toy, but it runs out of momentum early, and Almodóvar can't figure out how to start it up again. The story, about a released mental patient (Antonio Banderas) who follows a sexy actress (Victoria Abril) and then takes her prisoner, seems to tie the director's *wild imagination down, and his efforts to* keep his (and the audience's) blood circulating betray some desperation. Neither the kidnapper's romantic obsession nor his captive's eventual love for him is especially convincing. And we don't fully enjoy the perverse humor of the situation, either: we've seen the victim subdued by a hard slap, and that image is too strong to forget. The limpness of "Tie Me Up!" suggests that Almodóvar is either a confused director or a tired one—probably a bit of both. It's as if he had made the movie solely to satisfy the public's demand for a new Almodóvar film. In Spanish.—T.R. (5/7/90) (8th St. Playhouse, and Lincoln Plaza.)

The War of the Roses—*Michael Douglas and* Kathleen Turner play Oliver and Barbara Rose, a yuppie couple whose banally "perfect" marriage isn't strong enough to survive their individual mid-life crises. When they decide to divorce, things get real ugly: the Roses' hatred and pettiness keep escalating, to the point of absurdity and far beyond. These successful, eighties-style people are revealed as greedy, self-centered, infantile: *they'd rather die than have to sacrifice either* their egos or their possessions. (This social observation may not come as a surprise to everybody.) "The War of the Roses," written by Michael Leeson (from a novel by Warren Adler), is one of Hollywood's periodic attempts at black comedy, and, like most of its predecessors, it's not quite black enough and not quite funny enough. The director, Danny DeVito, who also acts in the film, seems a bit too pleased with his own outrageousness. The picture has a peculiar, not very satisfying tone: smugly savage.—T.R. (Gotham Cinema.)



I've fished a lot of places on this river, but I've always had the best luck right here. Maybe it's the temperature of this water, maybe it's the currents, but I've caught fish here even when the local experts say they aren't taking. It's so peaceful, so still, I'd come here even if I never caught another fish, or at least that's what I tell myself when I'm not catching any.

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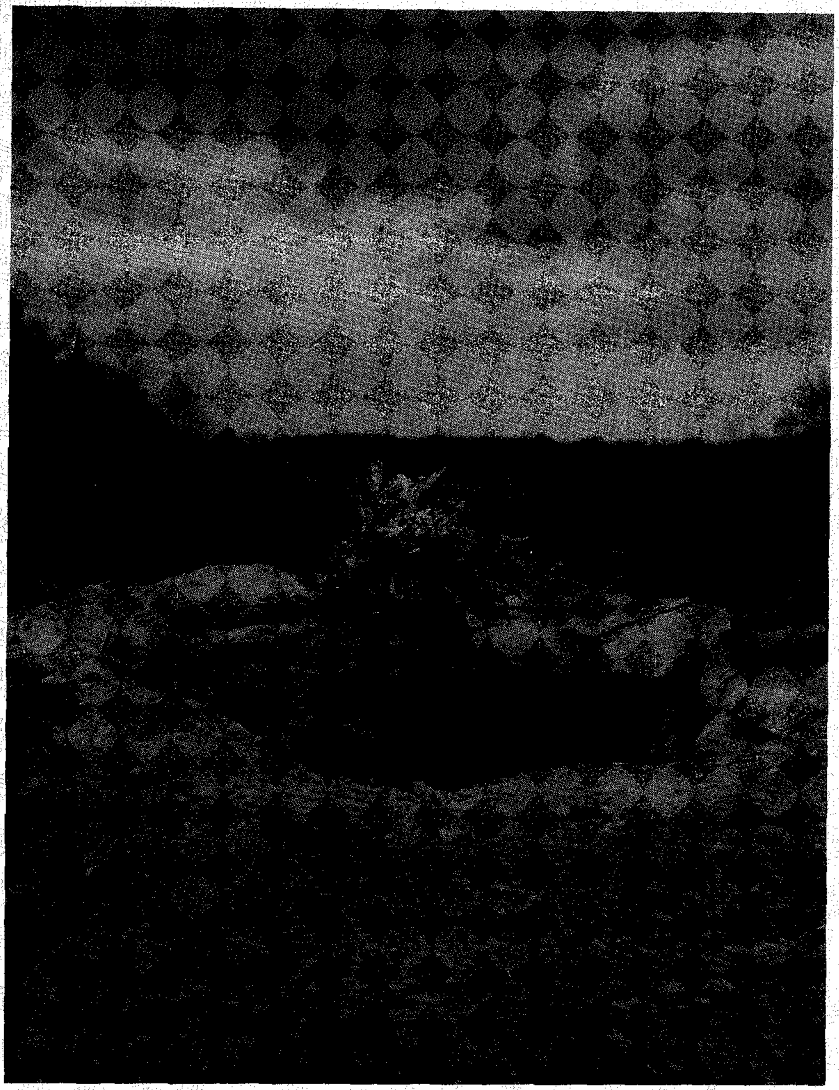

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THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

THE Iran-Contra scandal began on November 22, 1986, with the discovery of the so-called "diversion memo" in Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North's National Security Council files—a document stating that twelve million dollars in "residual funds" from the sale of armaments to Iran would be allocated to "purchase critically needed supplies for the Nicaraguan Democratic Resistance Forces," otherwise known as the Contras. Now, more than three and a half years later, the scandal is not over. Through a lawsuit filed under the Freedom of Information Act, two public-interest organizations—the National Security Archive and Public Citizen—have forced the Bush Administration to declassify in full or in part more than twenty-six hundred pages of Colonel North's personal notebooks, and at a press conference in Washington the other day they made them available to the American public.

Oliver North, it turns out, was a copious notetaker and notemaker—odd habits for a man who considered himself to be a professional covert operative. He scrawled a daily chronicle of all his meetings and telephone calls on a stenographic pad that he kept with him at all times. Included in the diaries are summaries of communications with dozens of ranking Reagan Administration officials from the White House, the National Security Council, the C.I.A., the Pentagon, and the State Department; with dignitaries, legislators, generals, covert operatives, mercenaries, wealthy conservatives, and foreign Presidents; and with anybody else who played even a minor role in the operations run by North and his superiors.

There are twenty-two notebooks, covering the period from January, 1984, to November 25, 1986, when North was fired, and they constitute nothing less than a contemporaneous handwritten history of the most secret workings of the United States national-security apparatus during the Reagan Administration. Almost every page documents the candid discussions and secret meetings that were daily fare for North and his colleagues. For example, in March, 1984, North attended a private meeting in Tegucigalpa with Roberto Suazo Córdova, then the President of Honduras. When the discussion turned to the regional-peace process known as Contadora, Suazo admitted what some political analysts have long suspected: "We participate just for export." Suazo also complained that after the invasion of Grenada the United States "should have gone on" to Nicaragua. Then, in August, 1986, ten weeks after the *Times* ran a front-page story on General Manuel Noriega under the headline "PANAMA STRONGMAN SAID TO TRADE IN DRUGS, ARMS AND ILLICIT MONEY," North made notes on a meeting he'd had with a C.I.A. official involved in covert Contra operations: "Send word back to Noriega to meet in Europe or Israel. —Tell [Assistant Secretary of State Elliott] Abrams that Noriega has asked for mtg w/Goode [North's code name] re cleaning up image." In an entry dated September 22nd, North recorded a discussion he'd had with Noriega in London which focussed on establishing a Contra training camp in Panama and on obtaining Panamanian assistance in staging major sabotage attacks against Nicaragua's economic infrastructure.

These embarrassing details, and many others, were withheld from the American people until last month, when Judge Norma Holloway Johnson, of the United States District Court, ruled that the Bush Administration must produce the notebooks "forthwith." For more than three years, North, his lawyers, and the Reagan and Bush White Houses had successfully stymied even congressional efforts to obtain the notebooks, unexpurgated. North took his notebooks with him when he left the National Security Council, and his lawyer, Brendan Sullivan, excised what he deemed "not responsive" portions of them before turning copies over to congressional investigators. Not even a subpoena by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, which wanted the notebooks for its investigation into United States foreign policy in relation to drug running, was sufficient to produce the uncensored records.

SAHADI
SAHADI
SAHADI
SAHADI
MUDAMMAS
Nutted Pilaf

Eleanor Smith, the attorney for Public Citizen, says that the release of the North notebooks is “a sweet victory for the public’s right to know what its government is up to.” Indeed, the ability of two information-advocacy groups to succeed where the Senate Foreign Relations Committee had failed is a tribute to the tenacity of those who believe that a free flow of information is necessary for a healthy democratic society. At the same time, the saga of the North notebooks reflects the continuing ability—and determination—of the executive branch to hide its dirty laundry behind the classification process. Senator John Kerry observed in a statement issued after the notebooks were finally released, “There is something fundamental that is violated in a democracy when the White House can classify documents as ‘Codeword / Top Secret’ in order to suppress politically damaging information.” And even now the Bush Administration has refused on national-security grounds to declassify some two hundred pages of the notebooks. According to Senator Kerry, “we still do not know the whole story.”

Thus far, however, Senator Kerry’s is a lone voice on Capitol Hill. The press seems cowed by the stock response of Marlin Fitzwater, the White House spokesman, to any inquiry about George Bush and the scandal: “The Vice-President’s role in the Iran-Contra affair was completely examined in the congressional inquiry, and we have nothing to add.” And the public seems fatigued by the barrage of information that continues to keep the scandal alive without resolving it. That is the fundamental difference between Iran-Contra and Watergate: Watergate had a smoking gun, and when Richard Nixon resigned in disgrace the scandal had an ending, but as documents like the North notebooks are forced into the public domain the Iran-Contra scandal only generates more questions. These questions—the most important being what did President Bush know and when did he know it?—could easily be resolved if the public had access to documents such as Mr. Bush’s Vice-Presidential briefing papers and phone logs. Yet the whole story of Iran-Contra is unlikely ever to be known unless Congress, the press, and the public assert their right to know about the decisions and operations of our elected leaders. As James Madison wrote in 1822, “a popular government without popular information, or the means of acquiring it, is but a prologue to a farce or a tragedy; or perhaps both.” His recommendation that “a people who mean to be their own governors, must arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives” has yet to be fully carried out.

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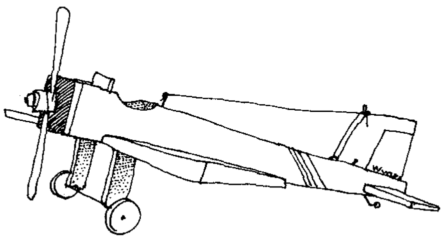
Boots

“THE secret of our business is that everybody’s got two different feet,” Jack Vogel said the other day. “If you are going to fit boots properly, you must know feet. Believe me, we know feet.” Jack Vogel and his brother, Hank, and Hank’s son, Dean, make custom riding boots and custom shoes at E. Vogel, a shop on Howard Street, one block up from Canal. The shop has a small walk-in showroom filled with rich-smelling leather samples of its footwear, and three floors of bootmakers hammering, sewing, gluing, and polishing, using the same techniques that Jack and Hank’s grandfather Egidius Vogel used when he opened for business, in 1879. The Vogels think of themselves not as shoe salesmen but as practitioners, to whom customers bring aching arches and spindleshank calves, and before whom they stand in their socks or stockings, to have their problems solved. One of the Vogels kneels before such a customer (on a special leather pad designed for this purpose) and carefully traces the outline of each foot on a piece of paper, then measures the ball, the instep, the heel, and the calf, and—for riding boots—calculates the boot height and the boot-top circumference.

Hank Vogel, sitting in a knotty-pine office at the back of the shop, told us his favorite story about how feet and legs swell—a tendency that is of the first importance in the bootmaking trade. The story began with an angry customer. “She came into the shop with blood in her eye, crying, ‘These are not my boots! They are too big!’ ” he said. “I measured her and got measurements entirely different from the first time. I told her, ‘You have swelling.’ She said ‘I do not!’ and walked out in a huff, leaving the boots behind. Two days later, she called and said, ‘Mr. Vogel, I think you saved my life. I went to the doctor, and he said he can help me. You were right. I have swelling.’ ”



Hank Vogel’s story reminded his brother of a customer who fell asleep in her riding boots and couldn’t get them off in the morning. “I had to remove them from her legs by opening the seams,” Jack Vogel recalled. “If she had just lain on her back for a few hours with her feet in the air, they would have come right off. But she wasn’t thinking clearly. Many people panic when they have swelling and can’t get out of their boots. We’ve had some cut through the leather with a razor blade or scissors.”

Custom shoemaking is an inexact craft, not only because no two feet are alike but also because everybody has his or her own idea of how a shoe should fit. Hank Vogel told us that women generally like their shoes tighter than men, that European feet tend to be stronger than American feet (“They don’t flatten out like ours”), and that Japanese have shorter and wider feet, and also require extra toe room (“They are accustomed to wearing sandals”). The Vogels know their podiatric anatomy. Bunions, hammer toes, flat feet, and sunken heels: from the knee down they have seen it all. To give us an idea of just how extraordinary feet can be, Hank Vogel sent Dean out into the shop to get a pair of shoes “worn by that fellow from Hardeeville, South Carolina.” Dean, who was outfitted in a cobbler’s brown leather apron, returned to the office hauling a pair of size-24 wingtips, each as big as a Christmas goose. “This man weighed over three hundred pounds,” Hank Vogel explained, turning the left shoe over to show worn-out spots in the sole. The South Carolina wingtips are even bigger than the shoes that E. Vogel made for Gottlieb Fischer, the giant employed by the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus in the forties; Mr. Fischer wore merely size 18. As we were discussing large sizes, Dean Vogel called our attention to a strange-looking pair of shoes on the floor near the office door—ovoid brown oxfords that had been returned

to the shop to be resoled. Their sheer width was almost painful to behold; they seemed like footwear for a fairy-tale horse trying to pass itself off as human. "Gosh, that guy's got big, flat feet," Dean observed. Old boots returned to the shop for repair are especially evocative: some are stained by horse sweat and years of muck and mud; some look traumatized by heavy wear; some appear merely softened and comfortable. Lined up in groups, with their shafts tilted in all directions, the worn boots look alive—a spirited convention of leathery lower legs.

All E. Vogel shoes and boots are made in the building on Howard Street, and each riding boot is worked on by fourteen craftsmen. Throughout the factory are bins filled with lasts—foot-shaped molds—ranging in length from size 2 to the monumental size 24 and in width from AA to EEEEE. After a pair of feet have been measured, the lasts closest to their size and shape are augmented with leather or sanded down to match them exactly. Then the lasts are used, along with measurements taken in the showroom, to make patterns from which the leather is cut. Unassembled shoes and boots bear little resemblance to the finished product. Lying on workbenches waiting to be sewn and to have their tongues tucked into the uppers, they look as flat as filleted flounders. Stitching brings some life to the riding boots, but they don't start looking right until the end of the process: after a five-minute soak in a small utility sink, they are packed with wooden forms, to give them shape and stretch the leather to the proper size.

Long ago, E. Vogel made mostly shoes; in fact, the Vogel brothers are quite sure that it was their grandfather who, around the turn of the century, when most shoes were still high-buttoned, introduced the low-cut style. This new look, a cordovan wingtip, sold extremely well on Wall Street, and it's still popular there. Now most of the E. Vogel business is riding boots. The selection includes all the classic designs—dress, field, hunt, jodhpur, paddock shoe, Newmarket, three-strap, Wellington, and polo—and many of the boots feature the E. Vogel innovations of a ribbed sole (for better grip in the stirrup) and an elastic gusset at the top.

E. Vogel boots are worn by the United States Olympic riding team and by many of the world's outstanding horsemen, but not everyone who buys a pair is an equestrian. Dean Vogel told us about a recent order from a guru in Colorado who needed custom-fitted boots because his feet were frostbitten from trekking across mountains in Tibet. Many celebrities have come to be fitted with an E. Vogel design or to have boots made to their specifications, among them Charles Lindbergh, Marian Anderson, Jimmy Cagney, General Pershing, Sigourney Weaver, and George Bush's father and brothers (but not the President himself). No matter how famous or how good-looking the customer may be, what the Vogels remember is the customer's landing gear. Jack Vogel's description of Sylvester Stallone, who had come in to order extra-fancy polo boots, was "He has muscular calves, but his feet are small."

Frolic

WHAT better way to celebrate good weather than with a Maypole and some performing chickens? We went out to the Queens County Farm Museum the other Sunday for its annual Rites of Spring and Maypole Frolic, and found some three hundred people gathered on a lawn to watch three groups of Morris dancers perform to the music of fiddle, accordion, melodeon, and concertina. The farm, which is in Floral Park and covers forty-seven acres, dates from about 1772 and is thought to be the oldest continuously active one in New York State. Since the museum opened its gates to the public, in 1975, it has accommodated increasing numbers of visitors (a hundred and twenty-five thousand in 1989), who come to stroll past cultivated fields and an orchard and to observe—and sometimes pet—pigs and goats and other animals.

The day had dawned cloudy, but by noon a bright sunlight was reflected from the blades of an all-female team of dancers called Half Moon Sword. After an hour or so, the dancing ended, and the crowd set off down a dirt road to a lawn where the concertina player and the fiddler were erecting a tall sapling to serve as a Maypole. The sapling broke twice, but some men with bells on their legs managed to splint it, and soon children and adults were dancing around the pole, entwining it with colored ribbons. When it was fully wrapped, we headed for a large tent, inside which some people were watching Carolyn Bowman Stebe and her performing chickens. Three bantam hens—an Old English, a Sebright, and a Belgian quail—did things like climbing a ramp, traversing a tabletop on a roller, and clinging to a trapeze. Ms. Bowman Stebe, a cheerful-looking round-faced woman, was wearing a traditional Dutch-style dress and wooden shoes. When she had a free moment, we asked her how she went about acquiring and training chickens.

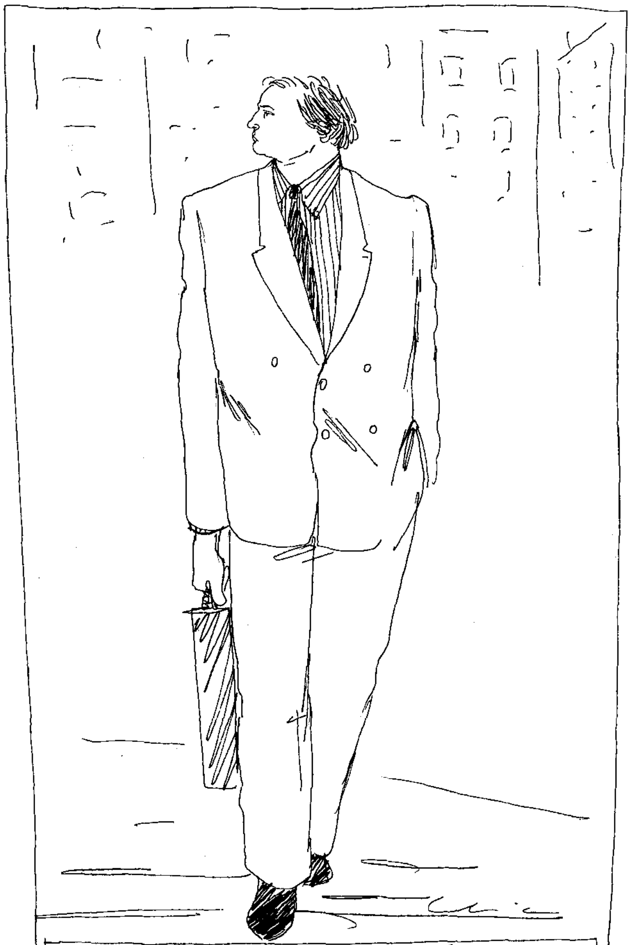
"I look for a special type," she said. "A performing chicken has to have a calm personality. I would never work with a leghorn, say, because that's a nervous breed. After I get a chicken, I need about a month to know if it's going to work out. If it's good, I start training it, but always with other chickens, because they need each other for emotional support. I had one bantam for sixteen years before it died on me."

Next, we joined James Trent, the president of the Colonial Farmhouse Restoration Society of Bellerose, Inc., which runs the museum, and several family groups aboard a long wagon filled with bales of hay. As a tractor pulled the wagon along a bumpy road, Mr. Trent told us that he had helped found the museum, fifteen years ago. "There used to be a lot of small farms in this part of Queens, but nearly all of them disappeared after the Second World War to make way for housing developments," he said. "During most of this century, this farm belonged to Creedmoor State Hospital, which is just to the southwest. Creedmoor patients began working it in the nineteen-twenties, and when the hospital ended that activity, in 1960, Creedmoor's security guards took over and continued farming it. But in 1973 the state decided to auction the land off, and eventually this historic farm would have vanished, probably to be replaced by high rises. We've got *enough* high rises out here, so a group of us got together and managed to save the farm. There are two other working farms in the city—one in Fresh Meadows and one on Staten Island— but this is the only one open to the public."

In a field of lettuce to our right, a man in a blue shirt was working with a rototiller, and Mr. Trent said, "That's Andrew Stuckey. He's our only full-time farmer. Students come from the City Volunteer Corps and also from John Bowne High School, in Flushing, to help him out. Hey, Andrew!" He waved, and Mr. Stuckey waved back. "The museum does wonders just by bringing people in contact with the land," Mr. Trent went on. "Through most of human history, people have lived side by side with farm animals. Ours is the first era when people have been disconnected from the natural world. Kids today, especially, seem to know nothing about it. Oh, they may be streetwise, and they may be marvels at a computer, but bring them out to a farm and it's amazing how ignorant many of them are. They just don't have any *concept* of how things work. For instance, kids will ask 'How do you get chickens to lay their eggs in those cardboard cartons?' And even some adults are surprised to see pumpkins growing on vines. We ask them, 'Where did you *think* pumpkins grew?' They say, 'On trees?'" Mr. Trent shook his head.

We asked him whether he spent all his time at the farm.

"Oh, no," he said. "We have a full-time executive director, Lillian Naar, and I'm able to be here only on weekends. I work at the Municipal Building in Manhattan—I'm a deputy chief in the Department of General Services. I live in Bellerose, right down the road. That's why I got involved in the farm in the first place. It's vital for us to maintain vestiges of the rural life in this enormous, hyperactive city. And farming is very soothing to the nerves."

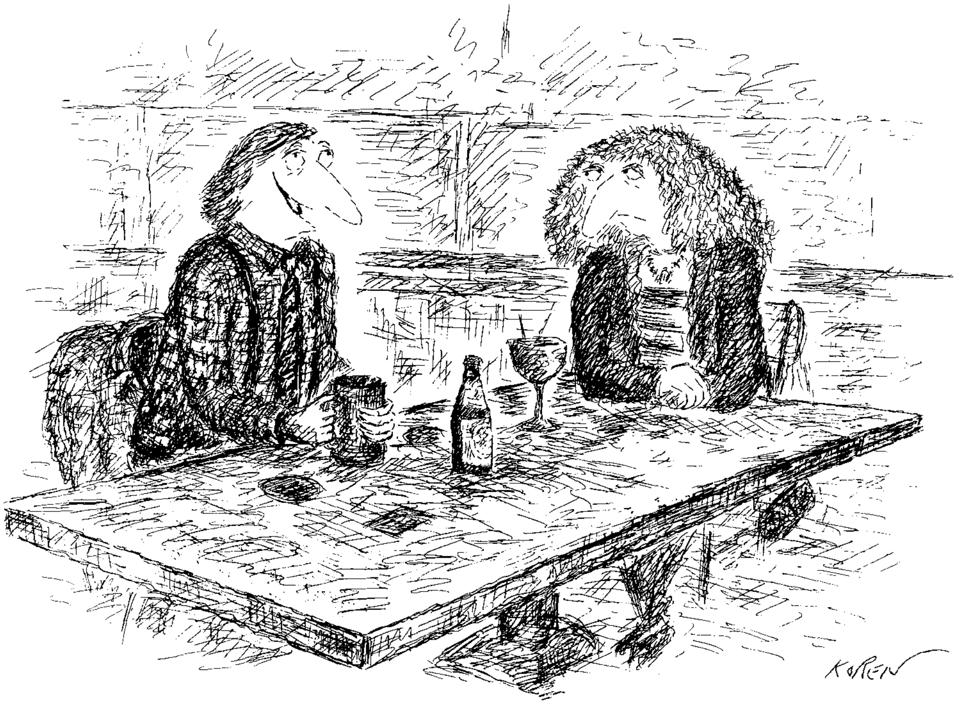


NINETEEN MINUTES AHEAD OF THE WORLD,
TWO MONTHS BEHIND IN THE RENT

Myth

PATRICK PASCULLI, the Mayor of Hoboken, is not looking for a fight, because what is there to fight about? Everyone in Hoboken agrees with Mayor Pasculli about the facts that matter: that the steam-powered locomotive, the steam-powered ferry, the music and lyrics of "Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair," and Frank Sinatra were all hatched in Hoboken, as was baseball. This last fact, the only one that is even marginally in dispute, has Mayor Pasculli preoccupied at the moment. Most of the world outside Hoboken tends to credit Abner Doubleday with the invention of baseball, in 1839, in Cooperstown, New York. Mayor Pasculli takes the position that Abner Doubleday was a perfectly capable Civil War general but that baseball was invented in another time and place—specifically, on June 19, 1846, at Elysian Fields in Hoboken—by Alexander Joy Cartwright, Jr., whose team, the Knickerbockers, managed to lose that first game, which lasted four innings, 23–1.

That the tourism industry in Cooperstown thrives in large part because of the Doubleday legend might lead to the conclusion that mercenary considerations were on Mayor Pasculli's mind when he held a press conference the other day, in the lobby of an office building in downtown Hoboken, to draw attention to the city's baseball birthright. Such a cynical inference, however, would suggest that the Mayor is bent on discovering new sources of tax revenue when, as it happens, he is bent merely on revising history and promulgating truth. Late last year, Mayor Pasculli, Assemblyman Bernard F. Kenny, Jr., and Stephen Speiser, a Hoboken attorney, created the American Baseball Heritage, Inc., a nonprofit corporation that on this June 19th will inaugurate Baseball Day, with a gathering at Stevens Park which will feature two Hoboken Department of Recreation teams in a simulation of the very first game. The long-range plan is that Baseball Day will become an annual ritual, and Hoboken will eventually have its own baseball museum.



"Commitment? I think I'm going to let that idea marinate awhile."

"All over the state, all over the country, people have very positive feelings about this city," said Assemblyman Kenny, who m.c.'d the press conference. With encyclopedic thoroughness, Assemblyman Kenny acknowledged the V.I.P.s in the crowd: Mayor Pasculli, Stephen Speiser, Buddy Matthews (head baseball coach of the Hoboken High Redwings), Richard Tremitiedi (Hoboken fire chief), Bernard Bush (executive director of the New Jersey Historical Commission), Neal J. Carroll (executive director of the Governor's Council on Sports and Physical Fitness), Anthony Cardino (director of the Hoboken Parking Authority), Maurice Fitzgibbons (director of the New Jersey Office of Ethnic Affairs), James Farina (Hoboken city clerk), Peggy Thomas (Hoboken director of community development), Charles Rozzi (Hoboken director of recreation), Paul Costello (representing Congressman Frank Guarini), City Councilman David Roberts, Eileen Thornton (representative of the New Jersey Division of Travel and Tourism), William La Rosa (director of the Hudson County Division of Cultural and Heritage Affairs), Ed Chius (Hoboken business administrator), and Michael Vernaglia (graphic artist, creator of a new, multicolored, neon-bright "Hoboken: Birthplace of Baseball" logo, and a son of Thomas Vernaglia, member of the Hoboken Rent Levelling and Stabilization Board). Governor Jim Florio, who was invited but could not attend, sent a letter in which he endorsed historical truth and justice. Joan Haberle, the New Jersey Secretary of State, who did attend, spoke briefly about New Jersey State Assembly Joint Resolution 77, which she called "not a formality but a definitive mandate that baseball started here."

The keynote remarks were delivered by Mayor Pasculli, who declaimed, "It's pure fiction! It's Hollywood hyperbole! It's an outrageous myth that has been perpetrated on the American people and the world!" The Mayor's oratorical gift is the ability to sound pugnacious but unthreatening. When a reporter asked a question about a New York State plan to issue automobile license tags that refer to the invention of baseball in Cooperstown, the Mayor said, "We have Baseball Day, and a gubernatorial proclamation, and a work of art on our side. I would say that all that is more substantive than a mere license plate."

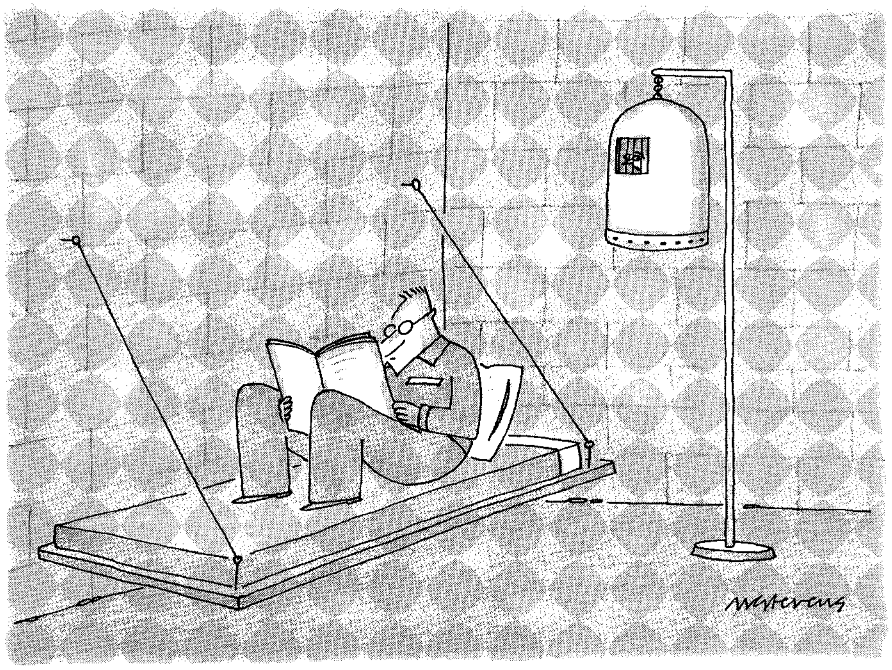
The speaker's platform was decorated not with the new logo but with a large baseball-shaped sign that said "HOBOKEN BIRTHPLACE OF BASEBALL." At the rear of the lobby, on risers, stood Melissa Miller, Barbara Reyes, Pandora Anderson, and about forty other members of the Hoboken All-City Elementary School Choir. Merry Naddeo, the choir director—her full title is Choral Specialist, Gifted and Talented Program—cued the group by saying, "All right, listen to me. *Eye contact.* You should all be focussed on that baseball." The choir then sang "Take Me Out to the Ballgame," accompanying it with precisely choreographed foot stomping and vigorous hand gestures.

Several members of the Hoboken Redwings, who went 17-1 in the regular season and made it all the way to the state-championship finals, were present to help remove a black drape covering the logo. The Redwing players were in uniform, and so was Vincent Anthony Petito, who was still in utero when spring training began but is now old enough to venture into a crowd wearing a pin-striped stretchie and a baseball cap. He came with his mother, Elizabeth Zebrowski, who is not actually from Hoboken but showed up because she is related to a business associate of Michael Vernaglia's. Before the official unveiling, Mr. Vernaglia said, "This logo will capture the attention of not only New Jersey's eye but, hopefully, the world's. And especially New York's."

A SANDSTONE FARMHOUSE

JOEY's first glimpse of the house was cloudy in his memory, like an old photo mottled by mildew. During the Second World War, his family owned no car, and renting one, for their infrequent excursions out of the compact brick city where his father worked, embarrassed the twelve-year-old boy to the point that he didn't see clearly through the windows, or was not conscious of much beyond his internal struggle not to be carsick. He fought the swaying, jiggling motion, which was mixed with the warm confluent smells of rubber floor mat and petroleum combustion, and the patient pale veiny look of his father's hand on the gearshift knob. Farm country, miles of it, poured past. Depressing, monotonous fields moved up and down beneath their hazy burden of crops. A winding asphalt highway climbed a hill, passed a lumpy stone church, then settled into a flat stretch where they slowed to turn left down a dirt washboard road that shook the car sickeningly. Not a building in sight. No sign of civilization but telephone poles carrying a single wire. Another turn, right this time, down an even smaller dirt road, and they stopped, and in the sudden flood of fresh air as Joey opened the car door, the green of the grass rose waxy and bright to greet his giddiness, his nausea. In his cloudy memory, they went up to the house and there were people in it, farm people, wearing cotton and thick muddy shoes, shyly trying to get out of their way, like animals. There was a front porch, he remembered that much. With a bannister upheld by boards jigsawed into an ornamental shape, and a secret space underneath, of weeds and pebbly dirt. A space where chickens could scratch, and dogs could lie and pant during hot weather, the kind of space that is friendly and inviting to a boy of the age he was just outgrowing.

By the time they had bought the house with its surrounding eighty acres and moved in, he was thirteen, and the front porch had vanished, leaving a space between the front of the house and the cement walk where they eventually planted crocuses and tulips and erected a grape arbor. Joey as an adult could not remember how or when it had happened, their tearing down the rotten old porch. Pieces of it remained in the barn—segments of bannister with the ornamental balusters cut of inch-thick pine. Once he even took a baluster home with him, back to New York City, as some kind of memento, or sample of folk art. The pattern held a circle in the center, a circle with a hole, between two shapes jigsawed into the wood, one like an arrow and one like a fish. Different-colored flakes fell dryly from it, brittle layers of old-time lead paint. The object, not quite of art, rested sideways on the black marble mantel of his apartment for a while, then found its way to the back of a closet, with broken squash rackets and college textbooks and table lamps that might someday be made to glow again. Like his mother, he had trouble throwing anything away.



If he and his father and grandfather had torn the porch down themselves, he would have remembered so heroic a labor, as he did the smashing of the lath-and-plaster partition that separated the two small parlors downstairs, making one big living room, or the tearing out of the big stone kitchen fireplace and its chimney, right up into the attic. Joey remembered swinging the great stones out the attic window, he and his grandfather pushing, trying not to pinch their fingers, while his father, his face white with the effort, held the rope of a makeshift pulley rigged over a rafter. Once clear of the sill, the heavy stones fell with a ghostly slowness, seen from above, and accumulated into a kind of mountain it became Joey's summer job to clear away. He learned a valuable lesson, that first summer on the farm, while he turned fourteen: even if you manage to wrestle only one stone into the wheelbarrow and sweatily, staggeringly trundle it down to the swampy area this side of the springhouse, eventually the entire mountain will be taken away. On the same principle, an invisible giant, removing only one day at a time, will eventually dispose of an entire life.

When, over forty years later, his mother died, and the at last uninhabited house yielded up its long-buried treasures, he came upon a photograph of her at the age of ten, posing in front of the porch. Someone in pencil, in a flowing handwriting not his mother's—hers was tiny, and cramped, and backslanted—had marked on the back, "Taken August 1914. Enlarged August 1917." Someone had loved this snapshot enough to have it enlarged and mounted on thick gray cardboard: who?

His mother, wearing a low-waisted dress, dark stockings, and black shoes with big, thick heels, her hair done up in a long braid that hangs over one shoulder, is holding the collar of a young medium-sized dog, part collie. Both the child and the dog are looking straight into the camera with similar half smiles and wide-spaced, trusting eyes. They are standing on a cement walk that is still there, uncracked; behind them the porch balusters repeat their simple artful pattern and a small rosebush blooms. The long-dead dog, the recently dead human female look identically happy. Joey would hardly have recognized his mother but for the thick abundance of her hair—a chestless cheerful little girl in old woman's shoes. Beyond the edge of the barn to her right, ghostly in the enlargement, are fences and trees of which no trace remains and, just barely visible, an entire building that has vanished—a tobacco shed, perhaps. The lawn is edged around the walk, and the fences look trim. This was the private paradise, then, to which she attempted to return, buying back the old sandstone farmhouse that her parents, feeling full enough of tobacco profits to retire, had sold while she was innocently off at normal school. Precocious, she had been skipped, and was sent off at the age of twelve, and hated it, hated it all, including the hour-long trolley ride to Kutztown. The swaying, the ozone, the drunk men who sat down beside her made her sick.

DIAL 1-800 REPENTS
Vietor

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SHE loved the old house; she loved the *idea* of it. For most of her life, except for the twenty years of exile in her young womanhood, when she went to normal school, then to college, and married a man she met there, and travelled with him until the Depression cost him his travelling job, and bore him a son, in the heart of the Depression, while they were all living with her parents in the brick city house—except for these twenty years, she happily inhabited an idea. The sandstone house was built, her fond research discovered, in 1812. In that era, teams of masons and stonelayers roamed the countryside, erecting these Pennsylvania farmhouses on principles of an elegant simplicity. Their ground plan was square, set square to the compass. The south face basked in the maximum of sunshine; the east windows framed the sunrise, and the west the sunset. The cornerstones were cut at a slightly acute angle, to emphasize the edge. The stout scaffolding was rooted in holes in the thirty-inch walls as they rose, and these holes were plugged with stones four inches square as the masonry was pointed, and the scaffolding dismantled, from the top down. In the mortar, lime from the lime kiln was mixed with sand from creek beds, to match the stones. Though the size of the stones raised and fitted into place was prodigious, the real feats of leverage occurred in the quarrying. Sandstone exposed in an outcropping was rendered useless by weather, but underneath the earth the sound stone slept, to be painstakingly split by star drills and wedges and "feathers" of steel, and then hauled out by teams of horses, on wagons or sleds. Sometimes the wagons shattered under the load of a single great stone. But this vast hauling and lifting continued, a tidal movement like that of the glaciers which here and there had deposited huge moraines, acres frightening in their sheer stoniness, in the middle of the forests—heaped-up depths of boulders in which no tree could take root, barren geological deposits fascinating and bewildering to nineteenth-century minds, so eager to see God's hand everywhere.

For sensitive, asthmatic Joey, removed from a brick semi-detached city house where he had felt snug, where he could hear through his bedroom walls the neighbors stirring as he awoke, and the milk being delivered on the porch, and the trolley cars clanging at the corner a block away, the silent thickness of stones just behind the old plaster and wallpaper, and the rough hearths and fireplaces visible within the country house, seemed to harbor nature's damp and cold. A sullen held breath dwelled in the walls. The summer's heat brought swarms of wasps, millipedes, carpenter ants, and silverfish out from the crannies. That first winter in the house, before an oil furnace was installed in the basement, a kerosene-burning stove in the living room provided the only heat. Joey remembered the stove clearly; it was painted chocolate brown, and stood on little bent legs on an asbestos sheet papered with imitation wood grain. He spent days huddled in blankets next to this stove, on a grease-spotted sofa that had been brought close. With his constant cold, he missed days of school, and hated to, for it was warm at school, and there was running water, and flush toilets. And girls in long pleated skirts and fuzzy sweaters and bobby socks, who belonged to the modern era, to civilization. He clung to civilization by reading; huddled in the brown stove's aura of coal oil, he read anything—P. G. Wodehouse, Ellery Queen, John Dickson Carr, Thorne Smith—that savored of cities and took him out of this damp, cold little stone house.

His mother remembered that first winter with rueful pleasure, as a set of tribulations blithely overcome. "It was really very hard, I suppose, on everybody—you were *so* sick, and your father had to struggle so to get to work in that old Chevrolet that was all we could afford, and for my parents it was a terrible defeat, to come back to the farm when they had gotten away; they would hide together in the corner just like children—but I was so happy to be here I hardly noticed. The movers had broken the large pane of glass in the front door, and for some reason that whole first winter we never managed to replace it; we lived with a sheet of cardboard wedged over the hole. It's incredible that we survived." And she would laugh gaily, remembering. "We tried to light fires in the living-room fireplace but all the wood the Schellenbargers had left us in the basement was moldy elm, and that fireplace never did draw well, even when the swifts' nests weren't plugging it up. Smoke leaks out into the room, I've never understood why. If you look up the flue with a flashlight, the stonework has a twist."

Joey seemed to remember, though, waking upstairs and putting his feet onto the bare wood floor and grabbing his school clothes and hurrying in his pajamas down the narrow stairs—the treads worn in two troughs by generations of footsteps, the nailheads protruding and shiny and dangerous—to dress in front of the fireplace, where logs were crackling. The freezing upstairs air would lick at his skin like flame, like the endless conversations between his mother and her parents, incessant flowing exchanges that would ripple into quarrel and chuckle back again into calm while he focussed, when he was home, into the pages of his book. His grandfather had a beautiful, patient, elocutionary voice; his grandmother spoke little, in guttural responses. His mother, unlike most adults, hadn't parted from her parents, and clung to them with old tales and grievances, like someone adding up the same set of figures day after day and always expecting a different answer. As Joey huddled by the stove, heated conversations were in his ears as the smell of coal oil was in his nostrils, but always, those five years (only five!) that he lived in the sandstone house with four adults, his attention was aimed elsewhere—on schoolwork, on the future. He tried to ignore what was around him. The house, even when plumbing and central heating and a telephone were installed, and new wallpaper made the repainted rooms pretty, embarrassed him.

Bernard Schoenbaum

"*I say we only get one head of hair so make the most of it.*"

HE was never more embarrassed than in that summer before they moved in, before they owned even the erratic old Chevrolet. Several times, his mother made him travel with her by bus out to the farm they already owned. She had a vision of a windbreak of pines rimming the big field, along the road, and she and Joey carried seedlings in boxes, and shovels, and pruners, and a watering can—all this humiliating apparatus dragged onto a city bus by a red-faced middle-aged woman and a skinny boy with ears that stuck out and dungarees that were too short. His mother wore a checked shirt like a man's and a straw sun hat and a pair of light-blue overalls with a bib; she looked like a farmer in a Hollywood musical comedy. There was no space inside the bus for the shovels; the driver had to store them in the luggage compartment and then stop and get out in the middle of nowhere to hand the tools over. It was a relief when the bus, headed south toward Washington, D.C., disappeared around a bend in the highway.

Joey and his mother walked down the dirt washboard road in the heat, carrying their equipment. He had never been so humiliated, so ridiculous, and vowed never to be again. He couldn't blame his mother, he still needed her too much, so he blamed the place—its hazy, buggy fields, its clouds of blowing pollen that made him sneeze and his eyes water, its little sandstone house like a cube of brown sugar melting in the heat, in a little dip of hillside beneath an overgrown, half-dead apple orchard. All through noon and into the afternoon they cleared little spaces at the edge of the field, where the Schellenbargers' last crop of field corn was pushing up in limp green rows, and cut away burdock and poison ivy and honeysuckle, and dug holes, and set in each

Just stay in the car, keep the doors locked, and try to remain calm!
LAWYER-COUNTRY SAFARI

hole a little six-inch puff of pine tree, and sprinkled water over the socket of sandy red earth. Moving a few paces farther on to plant the next tree, Joey could no longer see the last one amid the weeds and wild grass. The work seemed hopeless. Yet when the afternoon breeze came up, he felt a purity of silence—perhaps one car an hour passed, the people staring at this woman and boy in clothes neither country nor city—that didn't exist in his beloved street of semi-detached houses. And there was a kind of heroism to his periodic trudge, with the empty sprinkling can, the half mile along the edge of the cornfields to the empty house, with its rusty iron pump on the back porch, and then the long haul back, the sloshing can as heavy as a stone.

He felt heroic to himself. Space for heroism existed out here. He was determined to impress his mother—to win her back, since here on this farm he for the first time encountered something she apparently loved as much as she loved him.

At last, the weeds threw feathery long shadows upon one another and the tiny pines were all planted in the hopeless roadside jungle and it was time to walk back up the dusty washboard road to wait for the bus from Washington to round the corner. Having gone and come so far, the bus could be as much as an hour late, and their eyes would sting, staring down the gray highway for it, and his stomach would sink at the thought that they had missed it and were stranded. But not even this possibility daunted him, for he had forged a mood of defiant collusion in which he was numbed to humiliation and played a role both stoic and comic, co-starring with his heavy mother in her straw sun hat and his lanky, sharp-faced sidekicks, the clippers and the shovel. Years later, he could even laugh with her about it, those awkward hot trips to plant a line of trees most of which never thrived, choked by thistles and bindweed or severed by a too zealous mower. Yet a few of the pines, perhaps six or seven, did live to tower along the road bank—shaggy-headed apparitions taller than a ship's mast, swaying in the wind. By this time, the dirt road was macadamized and hummed with traffic, and the bus route to Washington had long ago been abandoned as unprofitable.

FIVE years after the September when they had moved, Joey went to college and, essentially, never returned. He married in his senior year, and after graduation moved to New York City. Another of his mother's visions, along with that of the farm as paradise, was of him as a poet; he fulfilled this heroic task as best he could, by going to work for an ad agency and devoting himself to the search for the arresting phrase and image, on the edge of the indecent, that incites people to buy—that gives them permission, from the mythic world above, to buy. The business was like poetry in that you needed only a few lucky hits, and he had his share, and couldn't complain. He never again had to get on a bus with a shovel.

The numbers attached to the years and decades slowly changed, and with them the numbers in his bank account and on his apartment building. His first marriage took place in three different apartments, his turbulent second in four, his short-lived third in only one, and now he wondered if women had not quite been his thing all along. He had always felt most at ease, come to think of it, in the company of men, especially those who reminded him of his father. But it was the AIDS-conscious eighties by then, and his hair had passed through gray into virtual white, and he found the personalities of young men an effective barrier to thinking about their bodies, and he was content to share his life with his books, his CDs (compact disks, certificates of deposit), his modest little art collection mixed of watery commercialism and icy minimalism. On the other side of the white walls of his apartment he could hear the mumble and thump of his neighbors, and he liked that. He was home.

Three hours away, his widowed mother lived alone in the sandstone house. Joey had been the first to depart, and then a few years later his grandfather died, suddenly, with a stroke like a thunderclap, and then, after a bedridden year, his grandmother. This created an extra room upstairs, so Joey and his first wife and young children, when they came to visit in the sixties, no longer had to camp out downstairs, on cots and the sofa spotted by the peanut-butter crackers he used to eat when sick and consigned to reading the days away. The upstairs had two real bedrooms, to which the doors could be closed, and a kind of hallway beside the head of the stairs where he had slept for five years, listening to the four adults rustle and snore and creak while girls and prayers and the beginnings of poems all ran together in his brain. His grandfather, on his way downstairs in the early morning, would ruffle the hair on the sleeping boy's head, and the gathering sounds of family breakfast, as Joey's grandmother and parents followed, would rise under him with the smell of toast, a doughy warmth of life rising beneath the cold bare floorboards.

There was a fourth room, a small room in the northwest corner, where his mother had once been born, in a long agony of labor—a rural calvary, as Joey imagined it, with flickering lamps and steaming kettles and ministering cousins arriving by horse and buggy—that shaped her relations with her own mother into, it seemed, a ferocious apology, a futile undying adhesion in an attempt to make amends. She nursed her mother in the old woman's long paralyzed agony of dying, but not always patiently, or tenderly, and when the ordeal at last was over she was left with additional cause for self-blame, more sorry images. "I spent my whole life," she concluded, "trying to please my mother, and never did."

Joey would ask, irritated by these pat surges of self-dramatization, "Did she ever say so?"

"No, but you knew her. She never said anything."

"Unlike *my* mother," he said, with an ironic pretense of gallantry.

She heard the irony. "Yes, I inherited Pop's gift of gab," she said. "It's been a curse, really. If you talk enough, you don't feel you have to *do* anything."

This fourth room had become the bathroom, with a tub but no shower, a basin but no cabinet. Toothpaste, sun lotion, hand creams, razors, dental floss, slivers of soap thriftily stuck together all accumulated on the deep sill overlooking the blackening shingles of the back-porch roof. After his father died, in the early seventies, the house gradually lost the power to purge itself of accumulation. Their occupancy, which had begun with removal of the porch and the chimney stones, now silted the attic and cellar and windowsills full with souvenirs of his mother's lengthening residence. On the theory that it would save the wild birds from being eaten, she had fed a stray cat that came to the back porch; this cat then became several, and the several became as many as forty. The kitchen became choked with stacked cases of cat food, and a site in the woods, at the end of a path overgrown with raspberry canes, became a mountain of empty cat-food cans. Tin Mountain, Joey's children called it. Magazines and junk mail and church pamphlets sat around on tables and chairs waiting to be bundled and taken to the barn, to wait there for the Boy Scouts' next paper drive. Photographs of Joey and his children, Christmas cards and valentines from relations and neighbors piled up on available spaces like a kind of moss. Even the table where his mother ate had room eventually for only one plate and cup and saucer, her own. The house was clogging up, Joey felt, much as her heart—coronary angiography had revealed—was plugging with arteriosclerosis, and her weakly pumped lungs were filling with water.

His arrivals, as the years went on, seemed to accumulate. He would park his car by the barn and pick his way across the line of stepping stones that in the decades since they were laid (even Granny, stiff and bent over, helping with the crowbar) had been silted over by the sandy soil and its crabgrass. On the back porch there would be a puddle of cats and kittens mewing to be fed. Entering the back door with his suitcase was like stepping into a quicksand smelling of cat food and damp cardboard. His mother saved, in separate sections of the floor, the plastic bags the supermarket bagged her groceries in, and slippery stacks of mail-order catalogues, and a bucketful of maddeningly snarled baling twine, to make bundles for the barn with. He recognized in this accumulation a su-

COUNTRY FAIR

If you didn't see the six-legged dog,
It doesn't matter.
We did, and he mostly lay in the corner.
As for the extra legs,

One got used to them quickly
And thought of other things.
Like, what a cold, dark night
To be out at the fair.

Then the keeper threw a stick
And the dog went after it
On four legs, the other two flapping behind,
Which made one girl shriek with laughter.

She was drunk and so was the man
Who kept kissing her neck.
The dog got the stick and looked back at us.
And that was the whole show.

—Charles Simic

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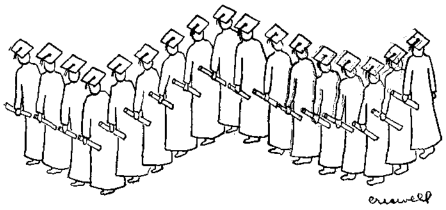
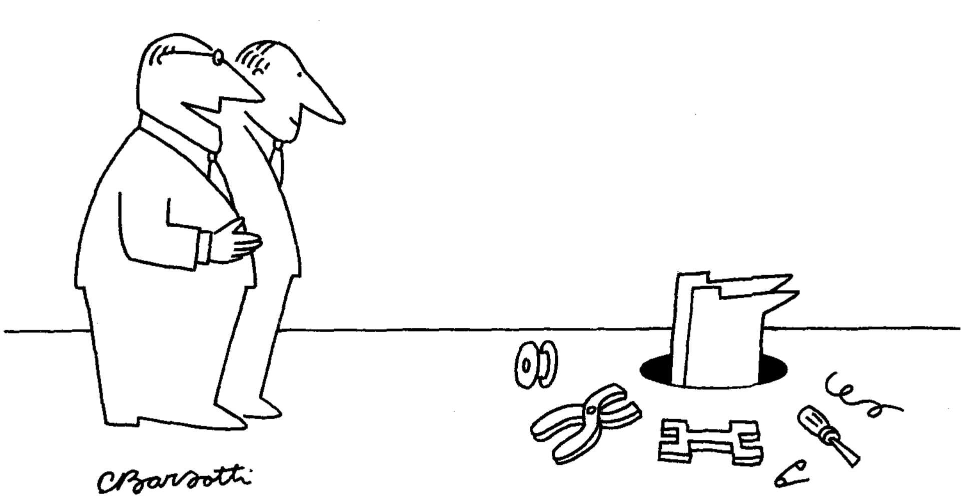


perstition he had to fight within himself—the belief that everything has value. The birds in the trees, the sunflower at the edge of the orchard, the clumsily pasted-up valentine received years ago from a distant grandchild—all have a worth that might, at any moment, be called into account. It was a way of saying that one's own life was infinitely precious.

There would be a peck of a kiss at the door, and he would carry the suitcase upstairs, past the whirling, nipping mongrel bitch, who was thrilled to have a man in the house. The guest room had been his parents' old room. When she became a widow, his mother had moved into her parents' old room, closer to the room in which she had been born. The move was part, Joey felt, of an obscure religious system that had nothing to do with Christianity. He remembered how, in a surprising rite of that system, his parents, the day after his grandmother died, took her stained, urine-soaked mattress outdoors and burned it, down near the stones he had dumped, darkening the sky all morning with the smoke.

Here, in this guest room, at night, without a wife to distract and comfort him, he would begin to fight for his breath. The bed sagged so that his back hurt. The pillow felt heavy and dense. The sandstone hearth of the never-used fireplace in the room would emit an outdoor dampness. Birds and bats and mice would stir in the porous walls, and his mother's motions would make her bed beyond the thin wall creak. Was she awake, or asleep? He could relax deeply only in the early morning, when the dog would wake her, scrabbling on the bare boards with her claws, and the two of them would slowly, noisily head downstairs, and the can opener would rhythmically begin to chew through the first installment of cat-food cans.

The guest room for some reason had no curtains; in the dead of the night the moon burned on the wide sills as if calling to him, calling him back to a phase his whole adult life had been an effort to obliterate. The asthma, the effect of inner tightening and complication, wasn't so bad, usually, the first two nights; he might manage five or six hours of sleep each if he could then get away, back to cozy, salubrious New York. But on long holiday weekends he would struggle through the whole third night with the accumulated house dust and pollen in his lungs, and the damp hard pillow, and the obdurate moonlight, so accusatory in its white silence.



"As C.E.O., I try to look at the big picture, while J.G., as president, sees to the day-to-day operations."

He was aware of his mother and himself, lying each in bed, as survivors of the larger party that had once occupied this house. It was as if, on a snowy pass, they had killed and eaten the others, and now one of the two remaining must perish next. She, too, in her eighties, had breathing problems, and slept with her head up on two pillows. One night she woke him, with the soft words, "Joey. I'm not doing so well. Put on your daddy's old overcoat and come downstairs with me."

He was awake, his head clear as moonlight, in an instant. "Shall we call the hospital?"

"No, I just need to sit up. You know which overcoat, it hangs at the foot of the stairs."

It had hung there for years, one of those curious comforting rags his father would acquire in thrift shops or outlet stores. Joey had often seen it on him, in the last year of the old man's life, when his legs turned white and phlebitic and his nose turned blue with poor circulation and his eyes sank deeper and deeper into his head and his deafness worsened. But to the end his father had held his head high, and took a lively interest in the world. Once a social-science teacher, he continued to read fat history books, and wrote Joey, in one of his rare letters, in his patient, legible schoolteacher's hand, that being deaf made it easier for him to concentrate.

Joey wondered why his mother was being so insistent about the coat, but obediently put it on. It had a fuzziness unusual in dark overcoats, and was big for him, since his father had been bigger than he. She was right; once it was on, over his pajamas, he became a child again, and calm, and trusting. They went downstairs and turned up the thermostat and sat in the dark living room together, he on the sofa and she in her television-watching chair, and he watched her struggle for breath, in little sudden shuddering gasps like the desperate heaves of a bird caught in the chimney.

"Do you hurt?" he asked.

She had little breath for speaking, and shook her head no, and her head underwent again the convulsion, as if trying to keep above water. "It's like," she gasped, "a squeezing."

"Sure you wouldn't like to drive to the hospital?"

A vigorous headshake again. "What can they do, but torture you?"

So he sat there, in his father's overcoat, fighting sleepiness, wondering if his mother would die before his eyes. The dog, agitated at first by this predawn rising, wheezed and resettled on the floor. The moonlight weakened on the sills across the room, with their potted geraniums and violets and a night-blooming cereus that had been allowed to grow grotesquely long, so that its stem filled the window. His mother's shudders lessened, and eventually she told him to go upstairs, she would sit here a while longer. In her old age she had become almost grafted onto this chair of hers. On a previous visit, she had shocked him by refusing, when the evening run of television comedies that she faithfully watched was over, to come upstairs at all; morning found her still sitting there, in her clothes. This irritated him, along with her television watching. "Why do you watch all these idiots?" he once asked her. "They seem realer to you than I am."

She did not deny it. "Well," she had answered, "they're always here."

Now, her crisis past, he accepted her dismissal gratefully and yet reluctantly. He went upstairs feeling that this hour had been the most purely companionable he had ever spent with her in this house. To Joey in his father's fuzzy, overlarge coat, as he silently watched his mother struggle and the dog stir and doze and the night-blooming cereus cast its gawky shadow in the deep window recess beyond the tasselled bridge lamp and the upright piano, it had been like one of those scenes we witness in childhood, from under the table or over the edge of the crib, understanding nothing except that large forces are moving around us—that there is a heavy dynamism from which we are, as children, sheltered.

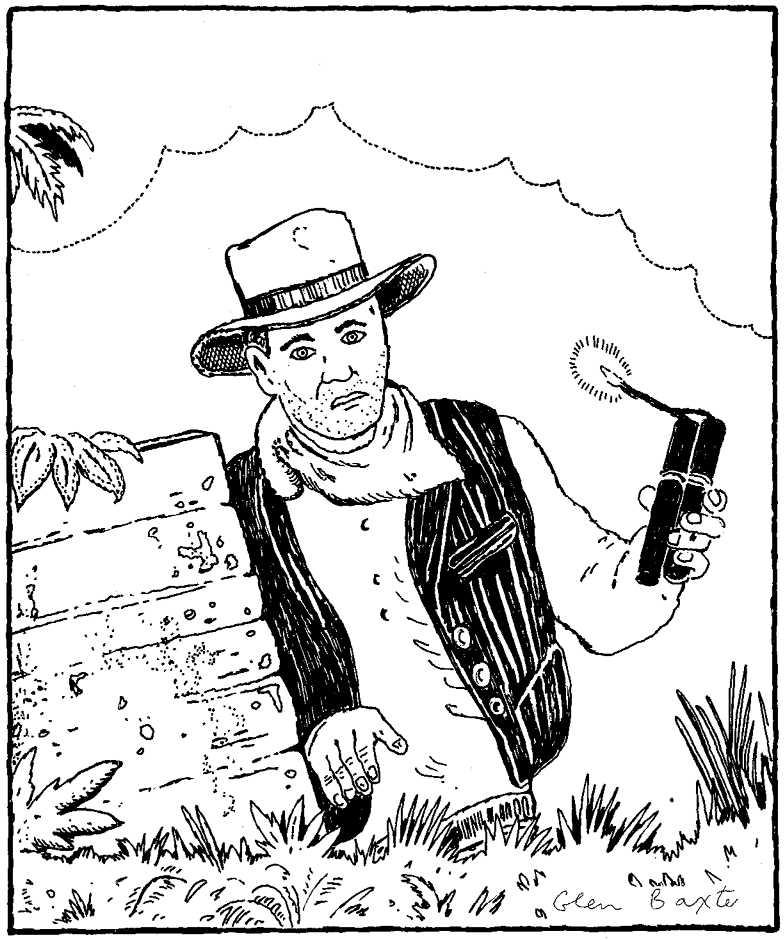
WHEN she had her next attack of breathlessness, he was not there, and she called the neighbors, and they called the township ambulance, which came at five in the morning. For all her talk of "torture," she seemed to settle gratefully into the hospital's ministrations. "They said I was quite blue, the oxygen in my blood was down to nothing." Rather gaily, she described the emergency-room doctors thrusting some violent sucking instrument down her throat and into her lungs.

Her bathrobe was turquoise with a maroon hem; she ordered her clothes from catalogues now and was attracted to decisive colors. With her white hair all about her on the pillow, and the baby-blue tubes of oxygen making a mustache, and the identification bracelet looped on her wrist, she looked festive and hectic and feminized. All day, young men in antiseptic garb came and tended to her, cutting her toenails, interrogating her bowels. Her bowels, to Joey's embarrassment, had become a topic of supreme fascination to her. Her insides in general were brought uncomfortably close to the surface by the wearing away of her body. His father's method of coping with what seemed to Joey her unaccountable whims, including moving them all to the farm, had been to say, "She's a femme. Your mother's a real femme. What can you do?" He would shrug, and sometimes add, "I should have put her on the burleycue stage."

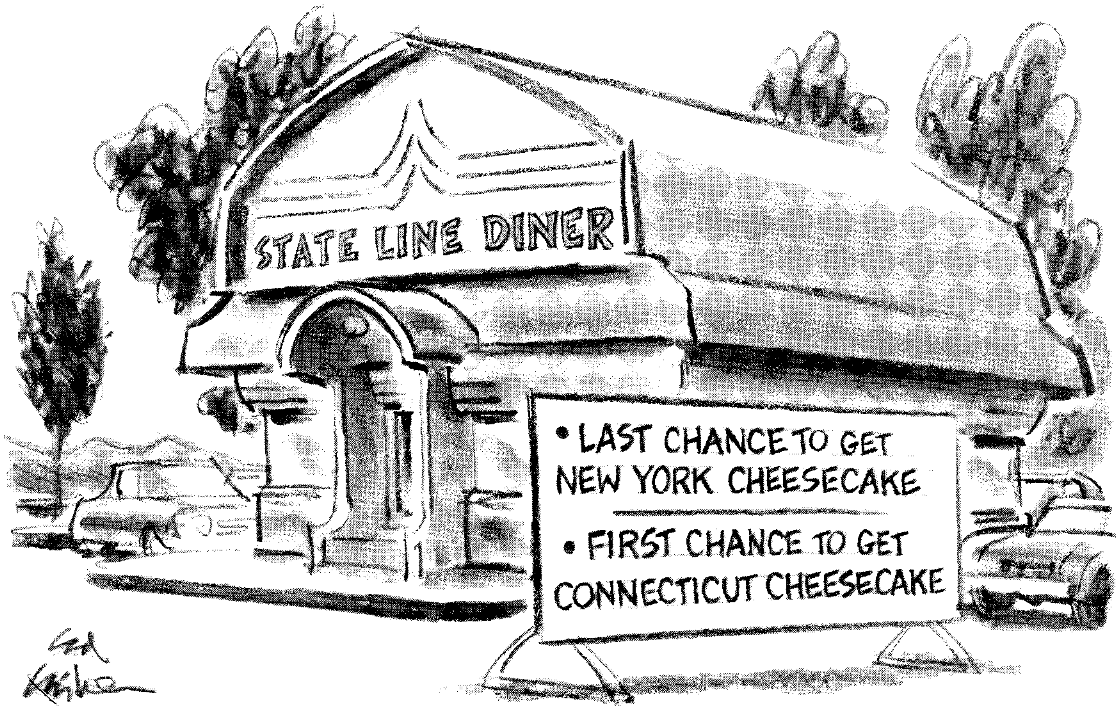
This had seemed one of the man's lofty, pained jokes; but now her femininity, which Joey's father and succession of wives had shielded him from, was upon him. In her slightly dishevelled, revealing gowns, in her gracefully accepted helplessness and fragility, in this atmosphere of frank bodily event, his mother had her sex on her mind. She told him, remembering the first years of her marriage in Pittsburgh, "There was this young doctor, Dr. Langhorne over on Sixth Street, who when I went to him with these pains on my chest I couldn't understand, told me to take off my clothes. Well, I trusted him, and did, and he looked me over for the longest time, and then told me, 'You're not obese.' That was all he said."

His own birth, her conviction that she couldn't do such a normal thing as conceive and bear a child, recurred in her self-accounting; old Dr. Berthoff, who kept brusquely calming her fears, who treated her as a normal woman and not as the monstrous product of her own mother's agony, emerged as a kind of erotic hero, and Joey suddenly saw that his own self, which he had imagined she cherished for qualities all his own, was lovable to her above all as a piece of her body, as a living proof of her womanhood.

And she recalled, of those straitened Depression days when he was an infant, how she left him in the care of his grandparents and went off on the trolley car to work in the drapes department of the department store downtown. She had lost a tooth, a bicuspid, and the upper partial plate containing its replacement was uncomfortable, and one day she didn't wear it to work and was chastised by the department man-



ZEKE NEVER DID TAKE TOO KINDLY TO DAHLIAS.


STATE LINE DINER
• LAST CHANCE TO GET NEW YORK CHEESECAKE
• FIRST CHANCE TO GET CONNECTICUT CHEESECAKE

ager, Mr. Wirtheimer, for not wearing it. The image of her missing tooth, this tidy black hole leaping up within her young woman's smile, seemed erotic, too, along with the thought of his then-slender mother's charm as a saleswoman. "On my good days," she said, "I could sell anything. But then the people would bring it all back for exchange on Monday. As if I had bewitched them. Mr. Wirtheimer said there was such a thing as being *too* good."

But not all her days were good days, she told Joey. She took her periods too hard, they knocked her flat for thirty-six, forty-eight hours; and this brought the conversation back to her body, her body arching over his life like a firmament, and he would leave the hospital building and find relief in the reality of the city, Alton, with its close-packed suburbs, which he loved as his mother loved her farm, because it had formed his first impressions, when the wax was soft. He ate at aluminum diners, shopped at hardware stores for parts and tools the sandstone farmhouse in its long decrepitude needed, and bought a new vacuum cleaner, since his mother's old Hoover had hardly been used for years. He even got himself a haircut in a front-parlor barbershop—the kind of shop, with a radio playing and a baby crying in rooms out of sight, and a spiral pole out front, that he thought had disappeared, because such shops had disappeared in New York. A small child of his, years ago, had knocked the porcelain lid off the toilet water tank and it had shattered. Now, between visits to his mother, he went about the city with the cardboard box of fragments, dusty and cobweb-ridden after years in the attic, to plumbing-supply houses, where overweight, hard-smoking, not quite sardonic men would return from digging in their cavernous storerooms and give him, free, old spare lids that did not, it would turn out, quite fit. He kept trying. Alton had lost factories and population since he was a boy, and appeared in smaller letters on the maps of Pennsylvania, but it was still a place where things were made and handled, where brute matter got its honest due, and he recognized as still alive in himself the city's blue-collar faith in hardware and industry and repair, a humble faith that had survived all his heady traffic in imagery.

Life was a series of plumbing problems. After a week, the hospital had cleared out his mother's lungs, and now the cardiologists wanted to operate on the malfunctioning heart that had let the pulmonary edema occur. The angiography had revealed coronary arteries stenosed almost shut. "Oh, Joey—I could go any day," she blurted to him after the test results had been described to her. She showed him with a forefinger and thumb how small the lumen had become. "Worse than they thought." She was sitting on the bed with her hair wild and one shoulder bared by a loose tie in the hospital johnny, and her facial expression was girlish, womanhood's acquired composure all dissolved. Their intermittently shared life was being lifted into new octaves, and they seemed in these moments of hospital conference simply a man and a woman, both with more white hairs than dark, taking counsel because no one else who mattered was left. They were it.

To his relief, she did not want the open-heart operation, sparing him the trouble, the expense, the tests, the trips to Philadelphia. He tried to suppress his relief and to argue for the coronary bypass that was recommended. She said, making a wryly twisted mouth just as her father used to when discussing the county's politicians, "Of course, *they* recommend it. It's what they have to sell. They're in business, just like their fathers, only peddling different things. They pass me around, one to another; I've yet to see a Christian."

In the frankness that her closeness to death allowed, as her composed womanhood melted, an anti-Semitism was one of the things that emerged, shockingly. She could not see the doctors as saviors and allies but only as opportunists and exploiters. She even developed with one solemn young cardiologist a banter that cast her as a Palestinian: "You've taken me away from my village," she said. Joey was dismayed; his third wife, the briefest one, had been Jewish, and she and his mother had seemed especially friendly, and as he imagined now his mother's suppressed feelings in those years it was like seeing silverfish tumble out of old books. On her less lucid days, she seemed to think that the doctors and their allies ("One big fella, looked just like Danny Thomas, came and cut my toenails;

now how much do you think *that's* going to add to the bill?") were scheming to do her out of her house and its priceless eighty acres—that she was territory they wanted to seize and develop. Each day she spent in the hospital, the little sandstone house pulled at her harder. "Get me home," she begged Joey.

"And then what?"

"Then we'll take what comes." Her eyes widened, watching his, and her mouth as it clamped shut over "what comes" was very like a child's, stubborn in its fright. For, however close their consultation and their agreements, both were aware that she was the star and he merely the prompter: though his turn would come, the spotlight burned upon her.

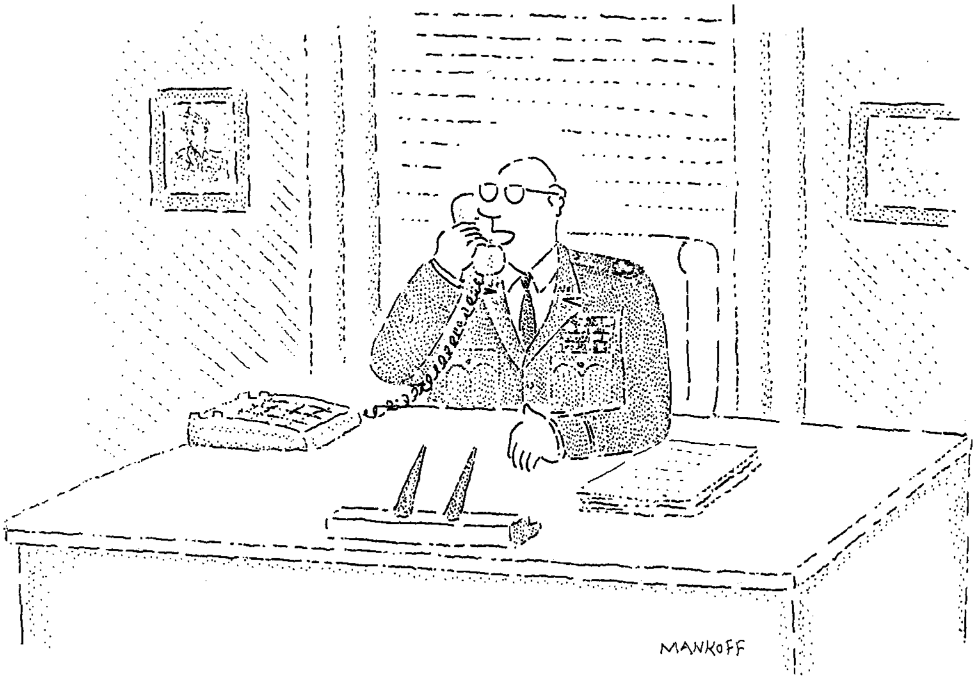
WHEN, six months later, she died—instantly, it seemed to the coroner—in the kitchen, just under the room where she had been born, the neighbors, who were patient Mennonites and Lutherans, took a day to find her and another twelve hours to find him in at his apartment telephone number. It was midnight when he let himself into the house. The door keys had been lost long ago, in that distant, fabulous era after they had moved. When his mother would be away for more than a day, she would lock the doors from the inside and go out through the cellar bulkhead. Her neighbors knew this and had left the house that way after her body was removed. Joey had brought no flashlight; after parking the car by the barn, he walked to the slanted cellar doors by moonlight, and within the dark cellar was guided by memory. A Lally column here, a pyramid of paint cans there. His father and he had laid this cement floor one frantic long day when three cubic yards of ready-mix concrete were delivered in a giant gob by a truck. He would have been fifteen or so, his father in his late forties. The cellar floor of these old farmhouses was typically dirt, the red clay of the region packed more or less hard, except when the foundation walls wept in the spring and it turned to mud. His father had talked with construction men, and set out boards to frame the platform for the furnace, and dug a clay pipe into the dirt for drainage, and stretched strings here and there to determine the level and pitch, but none of these preparations encompassed the alarming dimensions of the slowly hardening concrete when it arrived early that Saturday morning. With rakes and shovels and boards and trowels they pushed and tugged the sluggish stuff level, into the far corners, around the furnace and the mouth of the drainage pipe. His father's face went white with effort, as it had when struggling with the chimney stones several years before, and the ordeal went on and on, by the light of a few bare bulbs, this panicky race with time and matter, as the concrete grew stiffer and stiffer, and in drying pushed its water toward the surface, and exuded its sonorous underground smell, its inexorable stony scent. The floor had come out surprisingly well, out of that day's sweaty panic—smooth and gray and delicately sloped so that hardly a puddle lingered after a flooding. It sometimes seemed, in the mottled perspectives of hindsight, that there had been a third man in the cellar with them, something of a professional, for it seemed unlikely that he and his father, a history teacher and a would-be poet, could have made such a satisfactory cellar floor. But if there had been such a man, Joey had mentally erased him, jealous of this arduous day at his father's side fending off disaster, doing a man's job. He was just becoming a man, and his father was wearying of being one; this was the last project so ambitious that he tackled around the house.

In the blackness, Joey's city shoes slithered on the smooth cement, and then thumped on the echoing wooden cellar stairs; he pushed the door open into the moon-striped kitchen, and a warm whimpering hairy body hurtled up against him, and he thought that his mother had not died after all. But it was the dog, who took his hand in her mouth and unstoppably whimpered and whined as if telling him a long story, the story of her hours alone in the house with her mistress, with the body, with her hunger and bafflement.

Things work out. One of his former wives, who had remarried into the Connecticut suburbs, agreed to take the dog. The cats a man from the county Humane Society came and trapped and carried away to be gassed, a few each day. Joey stacked the magazines and catalogues and Christmas cards and tied them with baling twine from the bucket and carried them to the barn to be trucked to a landfill. The Boy Scouts no longer collected paper and bottles; nothing was precious anymore. As his family assembled, Joey impressed them with his efficiency, portioning out the furniture and heirlooms among his children, his ex-wives, the local auctioneer, the junkman.

For himself he kept little but odd small items that reached back into his boyhood in the brick house they moved to the farm from—a brass tiger that sat on the piano there, when he still took piano lessons, and a curved leather-backed brush he remembered his grandfather using on his black hightop shoes before setting off to the Lutheran church. He kept some of his father's college notebooks, preserved in the attic, penned in a more rounded version of his legible schoolteacherish hand. A set of Shakespeare, with limp red covers, of which the silverfish had nibbled some pages into lace. His mother's sun hats—these were hard to throw away, though none of the assembled females wanted them. His daughters sorted through the clothes for him. He couldn't bear to touch and sort the dresses hanging in the closet, dozens of garments pressed together in an anthology of past fashions, all the way back to a fox-trimmed spring coat whose collar he remembered close to his face, its tingling black-tipped red-brown hairs. In the toolhouse, where his father had left a pathetic legacy of rusty screws and nails neatly arranged in jars, and oily tools, half of them broken, mounted on pegboard, there were also antique implements worn like prehistoric artifacts: an ancient oblong pink whetstone pointed at either end and soapily warped by all its use, and an old-fashioned square hoe worn into a lopsided metal oval, its edges had struck so many stones. Such wear couldn't have occurred in the merely forty years they were here, but must have been the work of generations; these tools had travelled back and forth across the county, surviving many moves, to end in his impatient hands. They seemed sacred—runes no one else could decipher. He was the last of his line to have ever hoed a row of carrots or sharpened a scythe.

Relatives and neighbors spoke to him with a curious soft gravity, as if he were fragile in grief. He knew he and his mother were regarded as having



"Major Funding. How much do you need?"

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been unusually, perhaps unnaturally close; when in fact between themselves the fear was that they were not close enough. Why grieve? She was old, in pain, worn-out. She was too frail in her last half year to walk to the mailbox or lift a case of cat food or pull a clump of burdock: it was time; dying is the last favor we do the world, the last tax we pay. He cried only once, during the funeral, quite unexpectedly, having taken his seat at the head of his raggedly extended family, suddenly free, for the moment, of arrangements and decisions, and seeing an arm's reach away the gleaming cherry-wood casket he had picked out in the undertaker's satiny showroom three days before. The lustrous well-joined wood, soon to be buried; the sumptuous waste of it; and the image of his mother as he first remembered her, a young slim woman dressed in a navy-blue suit, with white at her throat, to go off to her job at the downtown department store, hurrying to catch the trolley car. She had once reminisced, "Oh, how you'd run, and if you just missed it, there wouldn't be another for twenty minutes, and you wanted to cry." She had laughed, remembering.

His tears came and kept coming, in a kind of triumph, a breakthrough, a torrent of empathy and pity for that lost young woman running past the row houses, under the horse-chestnut trees, running to catch the trolley, the world of the thirties shabby and solid around her, the porches, the blue midsummer hydrangeas, this tiny well-dressed figure in her diminishing pocket of time, her future unknown, her death, her farm, far from her mind. This was the mother, apparently, he had loved, the young woman living with him and others in a brick semi-detached house, a part of the world, youthfully finding her way. During the war she worked in a parachute factory, wearing a bandanna on her head like the other women, plump like them by this time, merging with them and their chatter one lunch break when he, somehow, had bicycled to the side entrance to see her. She was not like them, the tough other women, he knew, but for the moment had blended with them, did a job alongside them, and this too renewed his tears, his naïve pride in her then, when he was ten or eleven. She had tried to be a person, she had lived. There was something amazing, something immortal to him in the image of her running. He remembered, from their first years on the farm, a crisis with the roof; it was being reshingled by a team of Amishmen and they had left it partially open to the weather on the night of a thunderstorm. Crashes, flashes. Joey's parents and grandparents were all awake, and he, boy though he still was, was expected now to wake and help too; they rushed up and down the attic stairs with buckets, to save the plaster of the walls and ceilings below. There was a tarpaulin in the barn that might help; he found himself outdoors, in the downpour, and he had retained an image of his mother running across the lawn in a flash of lightning that caught the white of her legs. She would not have been much over forty, and was still athletic; perhaps his father was included in this unsteady glimpse; there was a hilarity to it all, a violent health. Working his way, after her death, through all the accumulated souvenirs of her life, Joey was fascinated by the college yearbooks that preserved her girlish image above a line or two of verse:

> She's blest with temper, whose
> unclouded ray
> Can make tomorrow cheerful as
> today.

Group photographs showed his mother as part of the hockey team, the hiking club. With a magnifying glass he studied her unsmiling, competitive face, with her hair in two balls at her ears and a headband over her bangs. Her face seemed slightly larger than the other girls', a childlike oval broadest at the brow, its defenses relatively unevolved. As he sat there beside the cherry casket crying, his former wives and adult children stealing nervous peeks at him, the young woman ran for the trolley car, her breath catching, her panting mixed with a sighing laughter at herself, and the image was as potent, as fertile, as a classic advertisement, which endlessly taps something deep and needy within us. The image of her running down the street, away from him, trailed like a comet's tail the maternal enactments of those misty years when he was a child—crayoning with him on the living-room floor, sewing him Halloween costumes in the shape of Disney creatures, having him lift what she called the "skirts" of the bushes in the lawn while she pushed the old reel mower under them—but from her point of view; he seemed to feel from within his mother's head the situation, herself and this small son, this defenseless gurgling hatched creature, and the tentative motions of her mind and instincts as she, as new to mothering as he was to being a child, explored the terrain between them. In the attic he had found a padded baby-blue scrapbook, conscientiously maintained, containing his first words, the date of his first crawl, and his hospital birth certificate imprinted with his inky day-old feet. The baths. The cod-liver oil. Trying to do the right thing, the normal thing, running toward her farm, her death. In his vision of her running she was bright and quick and small, like an animal in a trap. This was the mother he had loved, the mother before they moved, before she betrayed him with the farm and its sandstone house.

RUTHLESSLY, vengefully, weekend by weekend, he cleaned the place out—disconnecting the phone, giving the auctioneer the run of the attic, seeing the refrigerator and stove hauled off for a few dollars each, by a truck that got stuck in the muddy winter lawn. With his new vacuum cleaner Joey attacked the emptying rooms, sucking up the allergen-laden dust from the cracks between the floorboards, sweeping the walls and ceilings clean of their veils of cobwebs upon cobwebs. How satisfying this was, one room after another that he would not have to do again. Joey discovered that his mother had been far from alone in the house; while the cats mewed and milled outside on the porch, a tribe of mice, year after year, ancestors and descendants, had been fed sunflower seeds, whose accumulated stored husks burst forth by the bucketful from behind where the stained-pine corner cupboard had stood, and the back of the dish-towel drawer of the kitchen sink. He set traps for the mice. He set out d-Con, and the next weekend tossed their small stiff bodies, held gingerly by the tail, down into the swamp, where the rocks were, and the ashes of his grandmother's mattress.

The old house had curious small cabinets built into the stone thickness, and they disgorged packets of his father's index cards, riddled with anxious, harried reminder notes to himself, and pads of old high-school permission slips, and small boxes of dull pencils and hardened erasers, and playing cards from the remote days when he and his parents played three-handed pinochle at the dining table. At first, he could scarcely hold the cards, sixteen fanned in one little hand, and would stifle tears when his meld was poor and he lost. Once at the farm, they never played cards again. There were animals of petrified Play-Doh made by Joey's children, and useless pretty vases and bowls sent distractedly as seasonal gifts, and plush-bound old-fashioned albums, with little mildewed mirrors on the covers, of stiffly posed ancestors he could not identify. His mother had offered, over the years, to teach him their names and relation to him, but he had not been interested, and now she was not there to ask, and his ancestors floated free and nameless like angels.

There were things she had offered to tell him he had not wanted to hear. "What didn't you like about him?" he had once asked her—a bit impatiently, wearying of her voice—about his father.

Sitting in her television-watching chair, her weight and strength so wasted that only her mouth and mind could move, she had been telling him about her youthful romantic life. She had gone to a one-room country school—when she was dead, he came upon a photograph of the student body and its corpulent mustachioed instructor, his mother's broad little face squinting toward the camera under a ponderous crown of wound braids. Among the other children there had been a dark-haired, dark-eyed boy she had fancied, and who had fancied her. But her parents had disapproved of the boy's "people," and of several other dark-eyed substitutes that over the years she had offered them. But no, not until Joey's blondish, pale-eyed father did she bring home a suitor they could endorse. "They liked him, and he liked them. I'll say this for your father, not every man could have lived with his in-laws that cheerfully all those years. He really admired my mother, that style of little woman. He loved energetic little women. He thought they could make money for him. It's true, Mother was a money-maker. She was the one who got up in the dark to drive the cart into Alton to market. The tobacco they retired on had been her project. But admiring Mother was no reason to marry me. I was *big*. It was a mistake, and we both knew it. We knew it the first day of our honeymoon." Joey had often heard his mother's views on little women, how they have the best of it, and take the men from the big women

---

ONE MORNING IN EARLY JUNE

In the skylight it's Sunday,
A little aura between the slats of the venetian blinds.
Outside the front window,
a mockingbird balances
Gingerly on a spruce branch.
At the Munch house across the street,
Rebecca reads through the paper, then stares at her knees
On the front porch.
Church bell. Weed Eater's cough and spin.

From here, the color of mountains both is and is not,
Beginning of June,
Haze like a nesting bird in the trees,
The Blue Ridge partial,
then not partial,
Between the staff lines of the telephone wires and pine tips
That sizzle like E.T.'s finger.
Mid-nineties, and summer officially still three weeks away.

If *truth is made and not found*,
what an amazing world
We live in, more secret than ever
And beautiful of access.
Goodbye, old exits, goodbye, old entrances, the way
Out is the way in at last,
Two-hearted sorrow of middle age,
substanceless blue,
Benevolent anarchy to tan and grow old with.

• •

If sentences constitute
everything we believe,
Vocabularies retool
Our inability to measure and get it right,
And languages don't exist.
That's one theory. Here's another:
Something weighs on our shoulders
And settles itself like black light
invisibly in our hair . . .

Pool table. Zebra rug.
Three chairs in a half circle.
Buck horns and Ca' Paruta.
Gouache of the Clinchfield station in Kingsport, Tennessee.
High tide on the Grand Canal,
San Zeno in late spring,
Taken by Ponti back in the nineteenth century.
I see the unknown photographer
under his dark cloth. Magnesium flash.
Silence. I hear what he has to say.

June 3rd, heat like Scotch Tape on the skin,
Mountains the color of nothing again,
then something through mist.
In Tuscany, on the Sette Ponti, Grópina dead-ends
Above the plain and the Arno's marauding cities,
Columns eaten by darkness,
Cathedral unsentenced and plugged in
To what's-not-there,
windows of alabaster, windows of flame.

—Charles Wright

• •

like herself, big women who have tortured their little mothers in the birthing. Behind these formulations there was something—about sex, he believed—that he didn't want, as a boy or a man, to hear. *A real femme*. Even as a very small child he had been aware of a weight of anger his mother carried; he had quickly evolved—first word, first crawl—an adroitness at staying out of her way when she was heavy with it, and a wish to amuse her, to keep her light. But now as they were nearing the end, and her flesh was dissolving, and her inner self rising to the surface, he had become more daring, less catering, even challenging. Her own blue eyes, that had never needed a cataract operation, widened at his question as if she were seeing ghosts over his shoulder. "Oh, Joey," she said, "don't ask. It was un*speak*able."

He had to smile at the old-fashioned concept. "Unspeakable? Daddy?"

A bit of flush had crept into her colorless creased cheeks. She was getting angry, once again. She kept staring, not so much at him as at the space in his vicinity. She knew from watching television what the talk shows permitted people to say these days. "Well, maybe you're old enough. Maybe I *should* speak it."

"Oh, no, no thanks, that's all right," he said, jumping up from his chair and heading into the kitchen, much as his father used to in the middle of a marital exchange. *Poor Daddy*, was his thought. Let the dead alone. Now she too was dead, and there were many things Joey would never know. Though he grew used to the sandstone house without her in it, he still found it strange, back in his Manhattan apartment, that she never called on Saturday mornings the way she used to, with her playful, self-mocking account of her week. The dead can't even telephone. The phone's silence more than any other conveyed the peace of the dead, their absolute and, as it were, hostile withdrawal.

THE real-estate appraiser, an old high-school classmate, stood in his gray suit in the cobwebbed cellar, next to the rickety furnace, among the paint cans and rusty hot-air ducts, and said to Joey, "Seventeen years here alone. It took a lot of guts." Yes, she had been brave, he could now afford to see, all those years alone, alone but for the animals she fed, and the ghosts on television. Over the telephone, even when reporting an insomniac night of breathlessness and terror, she had tried to keep it light for his sake, and mocked herself, mocking her very will, at the age of eighty-five, to live. "It's strange, but I really don't intend to die. Though a lot of people would like me to."

"Really? Who?"

"The real-estate developers. The neighbors. They think it's time for this old lady to move over and make some room."

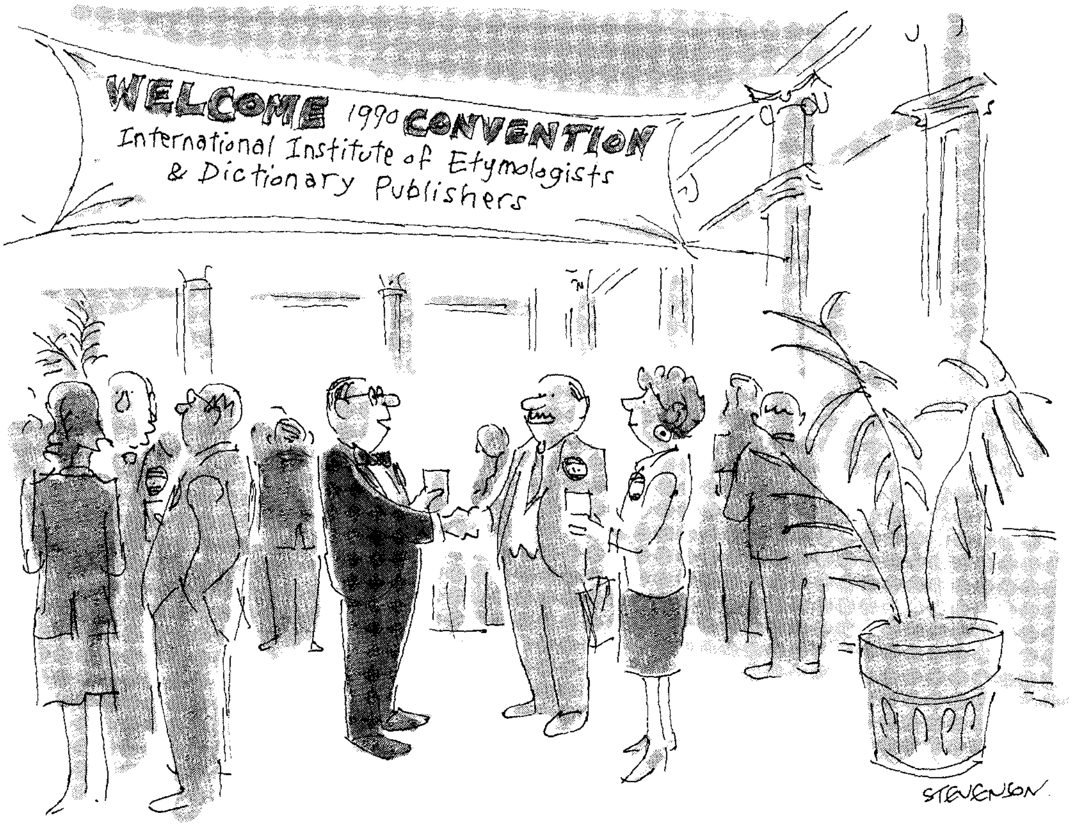
"Do they really?" He was grateful she had not included him among the many who wished her dead.

"*Really*," she mocked. "But I have a responsibility here. The place still needs me."

"We all need you," Joey said, sighing, giving up. The fate of the place was another unspeakable matter. She wanted the place to go on and on, as it was in her idea of it.

He had scanned her in vain for some sign of sunset resignation. She had choked down her pills and vitamins to the end, and her fear of life's sensations ceasing had seemed as pure as a child's. The last time he had visited, on a cool fall day, she came outdoors to supervise his planting, in two arcs by a curve of the cement walk, two dozen tulip bulbs she had ordered from a catalogue. At first he had arranged the bulbs point down, and then realized that the point was what would grow upward, toward the sun. His mother had stood there on her unsteady feet, in her gaudy bathrobe, looking down; the sight of the fat cream-white bulbs nested in the turned red earth startled a kind of grunt out of her. "Oh, how dear they look," she said. To Joey she added, "How nicely you do things."

In all of her leavings that came to light he was most touched by her accounts—her tax forms and used checkbooks, meticulously kept, even though her tiny backward-slanting hand had become spasmodic and shaky. (Could that big pencilled handwriting on the back of the enlarged photograph have been hers after all, at the age of thir-



"Hello, I'm Clifton (klĭf'tun) Latimer (lat'ĭ·mĕr)."

• •

teen?) She had kept, on a large pad of green paper, spreadsheets of her monthly expenses, ruled off by hand at the beginning of each month. The last entries had been made the day before the morning of her death. This financial and mathematical niceness of hers was something quite unpredictable, like a musical passion in a banker. Among the stored sheets of figures were several drawn up before they moved, with lists of expenses side by side, taxes, heating, utilities, upkeep—absurdly small amounts they now seemed, from that frozen wartime world. By her calculations, their reduced costs in the little sandstone house, and the projected rentals of their eighty acres to the neighboring farmers, would save them five hundred dollars—a third of her husband's salary. It had never really occurred to Joey that their move here had had a practical side. When he came to sheets showing how the money for his college education could be squeezed out among their other expenses, he couldn't bear to keep reading.

Gradually, through the stark months of a winter that was, according to the forecasters, unseasonably cold, and then unseasonably warm, he reduced the house to its essence, removing every trace, even a rusty pencil sharpener screwed to a windowsill, of his life and the four lives that had ended. Here on this patch of now uncarpeted wood his grandfather had fallen, having convulsively leaped from the bed where, a year later, his widow would breathe her last. Here, in the bedroom adjacent, his father had sat up with such pains in his chest that he told his wife to call the ambulance. He had died in the ambulance. Here in this same space Joey had lain sleepless, wondering how to tell his mother of his next divorce. Here on the other side of the wall he would lie after a date, his head still whirling with cigarette smoke and the perfume-counter smell of the girl. Here on the worn linoleum his mother had died, at the base of a wall she had had the Amish carpenters make of old chestnut boards, boards left in the barn from the era before the blight, to cover the rough stones exposed when the big kitchen chimney had been removed. The rooms had a soft beauty, empty. The uncovered floorboards drank the sunlight. Joey looked through the curtainless windows, seeing what his mother had seen—the sloping old orchard to the north, the barn and road and fields to the east, the lilac bushes and bird feeder and meadow to the south, the woods and the tall blue spruce to the west.

On his final cleanup visit, Joey found something devil-like—a small dark stiff shape, in size between a mouse and a rat, its legs attached by webs—floating in the bathroom toilet. A flying squirrel. It had come down from the attic and drowned, sick and thirsty from the d-Con. Joey remembered watching at twilight, that summer he moved the stones, a pair of flying squirrels sail, as if sliding swiftly on a wire, from the attic window over to the blue spruce. The house had stood empty before his family had moved in the previous fall, and this pair had moved in ahead of them.

He had bought a padlock for the cellar bulkhead, and closed the house with a key, having installed new locks. The house was ready for sale in the spring. But in the meantime, as he lay awake in his apartment three hours away, its emptiness called to him. It needed him. Suppose a fire, or local vandals, jealous of the price the place would fetch . . . Housing developments were all around, and even Philadelphians were moving into the area. His mother had made a shrewd investment, buying back paradise.

Those weekends alone in the house, sorting, cleaning, staying away from the motel until moonlight had replaced sunlight on the floors, he had discovered himself talking aloud, as if in response to a friendly presence just behind the dry old wallpaper, in the thick sandstone walls. His own uncluttered rooms, suspended above Manhattan's steady roar, with an ornamental piece of porch bannister hidden at the back of a closet, felt as if they were flying somewhere. He felt guilty, anxious, displaced. He had always wanted to be where the action was, and what action there was, it turned out, had been back there. —JOHN UPDIKE

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ANNALS OF SPACE

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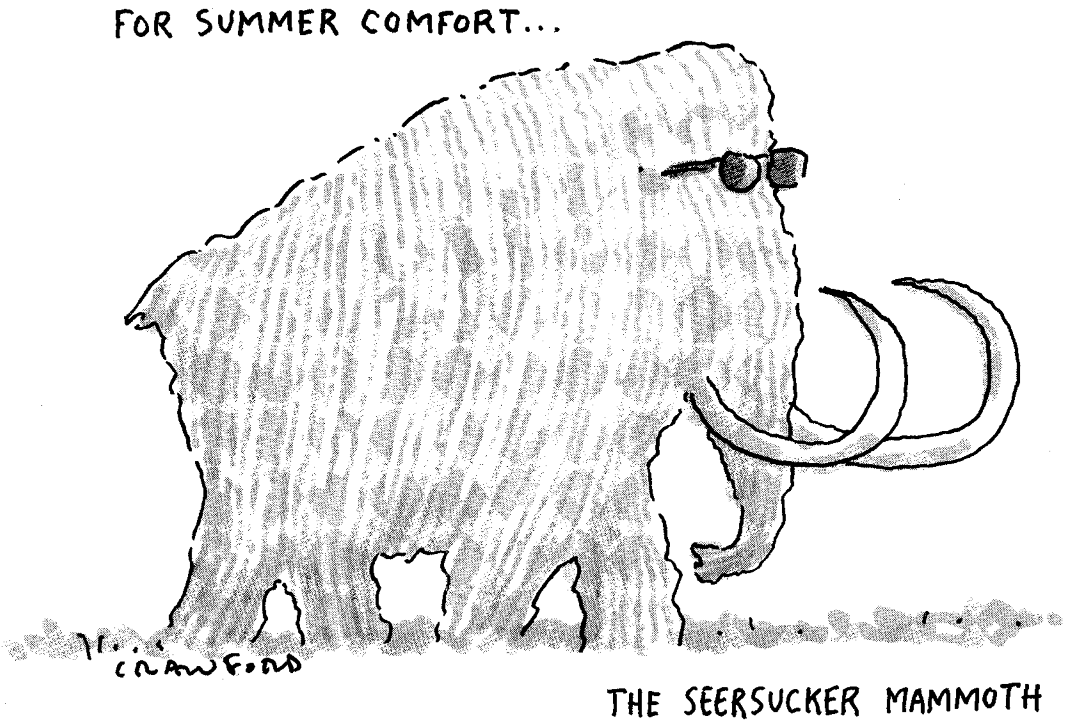
I—PHOBOS

IN the second week of July, 1988, two unmanned Soviet spacecraft—Phobos I and Phobos II—were launched toward Mars from Baikonur, in central Kazakhstan. They were named for their destination: the following spring, they were due to fly fifty metres above a small, blackish Martian moon called Phobos, a body not much longer than Manhattan. Phobos is the larger of the two moons of Mars, the other being Deimos, which is roughly the length of the Rockaways; Phobos and Deimos—Fear and Terror—are the sons of the god of war.

On August 29th, when Phobos I was ten million miles from Earth and more than a hundred million miles from Mars, the Soviet flight controllers lost contact with it. Like most planetary spacecraft during the cruise phase of their missions, Phobos I had been travelling with its principal radio antenna pointed back toward Earth and its solar panels, which powered its batteries, more or less broadside to the sun. It was about to begin observing the sun in conjunction with an American satellite in Earth orbit called the Solar Max. First, though, control of the craft had to be transferred from a tracking station at Yevpatoriya, in the Crimea, to a control center at Kaliningrad, outside Moscow. Before leaving Yevpatoriya, a flight controller sent a command to the spacecraft to turn on one of its scientific instruments. Then he and the other controllers made the two-hour flight to Kaliningrad, where, following established procedures, he sent the command a second time. However, the computers at the two installations had been programmed by different people and contained slightly different programs. At Kaliningrad, the command should have contained an additional letter—the letter B. Without this B, the command was misaddressed in such a way that the spacecraft's onboard computer read it as an order to turn off the attitude-control and thruster systems. On the Phobos spacecraft, one computer—actually, a system consisting of three identical computers working in parallel, to provide redundancy—handles everything; on most unmanned American spacecraft, there are two primary computers: one to direct the operation of the scientific instruments and the other to control the craft itself. Moreover, our spacecraft computers are generally programmed to request verification of an unusual or risky command.

Phobos I's computer began behaving a little like Hal, the malevolent computer in "2001." It radioed the ground that it couldn't deal with the instruments just now, because it had something more important on its mind; then it turned off the thrusters. When that happened, the spacecraft lost its orientation. American craft have the ability to reorient themselves toward the sun on their own after a certain length of time, but Phobos I had no such ability. The spacecraft's batteries, which were no longer being recharged by the solar panels, began to lose power—a loss accelerated because nonessential instruments were not automatically turned off in order to conserve it (something else that happens in American spacecraft). After five hours or so, Phobos I was what mariners and flight controllers alike refer to as "dead in the water."

At the time, no one on Earth knew about the loss, because Soviet unmanned spacecraft, which operate on smaller batteries than their American counterparts do, are not in constant communication with the ground. The flight controllers had been tuning in to Phobos I only every three days, and when they did so again, early in September, they were unable to pick up any signal. They immediately tried to reëstablish communication through two smaller antennas mounted at the ends of the craft's solar panels. These antennas were omnidirectional, and thus capable of picking up signals from a vast swath of space. They were, however, correspondingly weaker than the main antenna, and the flight controllers failed to reach them. On September 9th, the Soviets announced that there was little hope of regaining contact with Phobos I. An official press release from Glavkosmos, the Soviet agency responsible for the design and construction of the spacecraft, blamed flight-controller error for the loss.



In the opinion of many of the scientists involved in

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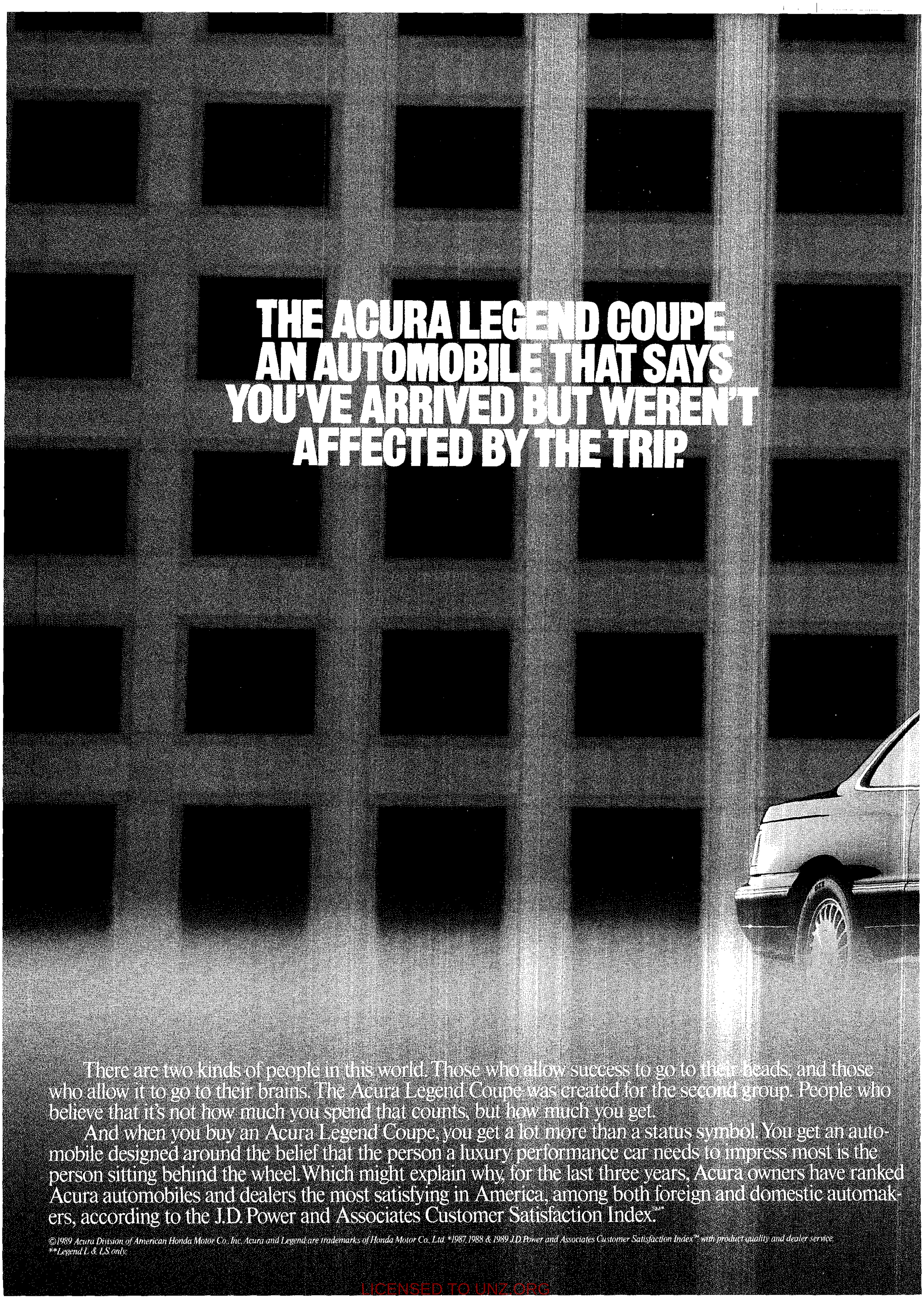

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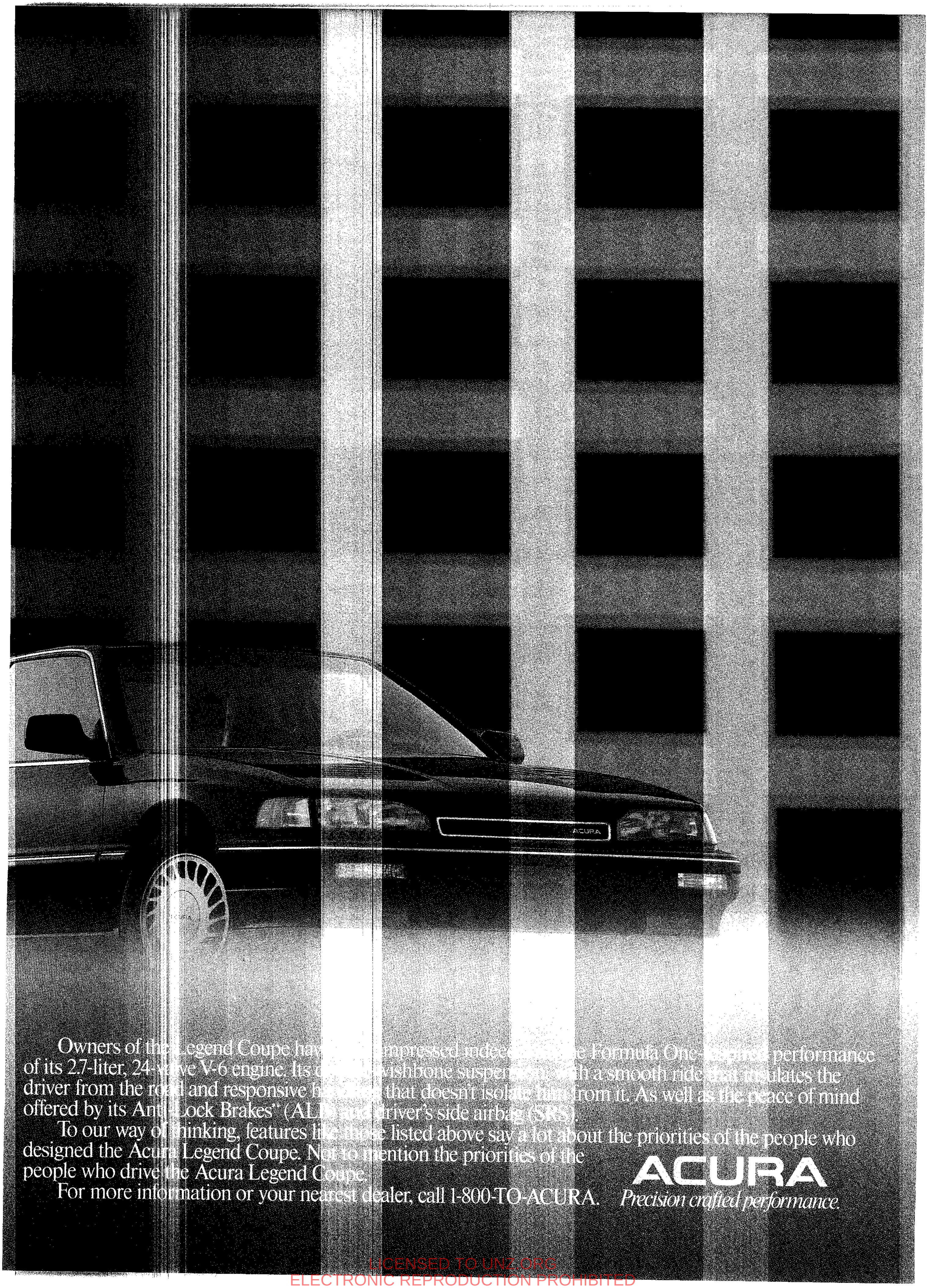

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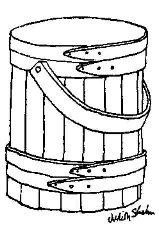
the Phobos mission—a group of a hundred or so men and women from the Soviet Union, Eastern and Western Europe, and the United States—the loss of Phobos I was a result of deep-seated problems with the way Soviet space engineers design and operate unmanned spacecraft. These problems, in turn, had their roots in difficulties plaguing the Soviet economy—difficulties that the Soviet leader, Mikhail Gorbachev, was trying to correct with his program of *perestroika*.

Though the Soviets fly many more missions than the rest of the world's nations combined, they are behind the West in managerial and technical skills, and especially in computer technology. They have always had problems with early models of new spacecraft, and the scientists had been worried about Phobos I and Phobos II long before they were launched, because the two spacecraft were the prototypes of a new model of planetary craft—the first new Soviet model in eighteen years. The previous model had got off to a rocky start. It had been designed for the exploration of Mars (and originally named Mars), and six such craft were sent to that planet in the early nineteen-seventies. All of them failed. The first few Veneras, which were sent to Venus around the same time, also failed. To many Western scientists, the Soviet Union seemed to be performing in space the sort of testing that other countries' space programs do on the ground. There is general agreement, though, that once the Soviets get all the kinks ironed out their spacecraft do very well, and, indeed, the latter half of the Venera series—using the Mars model—was highly successful, culminating in the Vega mission, launched in 1984, which took an international payload of instruments to Venus and on to Halley's Comet.



Everyone's hopes were now pinned on Phobos II. If it worked well, the mission could still be a success. In the months after the Phobos I failure, however, the surviving craft suffered from a series of radio and computer malfunctions. They began in November, when the principal radio transmitter stopped working. Later in the month, flight controllers sent another misaddressed command; this time, instead of being routed to the navigation system the command was delivered to the wrong instrument. The troubles continued into early 1989. There were numerous transmitter problems, and the spacecraft computer began generating wrong commands itself, as though it had a mind of its own. The settings of some of the instruments were changing inexplicably, without instructions from the ground. By February, the project managers had resolved to advance the encounter with the little moon as much as possible—perhaps to the end of March—before anything else went wrong.

A lot was riding on the success of Phobos II. First, there was the mission itself, Phobos being one of the more mysterious landfalls—or moonfalls—in the solar system. Then, there were the prospects for continued international coöperation in the Soviet space program; each spacecraft contained some twenty instruments—expensive ones, representing the combined efforts of scientists in thirteen countries. The Phobos mission was the first in a series of dual Soviet missions to Mars: the second, planned for 1994, is to orbit the planet, release landers, and deploy huge balloons carrying various scientific instruments; the third, planned for 1998, is to return Martian soil to Earth; and the fourth, to be launched sometime in the next century, is to land men on the Martian surface. The Phobos spacecraft was the model to be used for the 1994 mission, and perhaps for the 1998 mission. For all these missions, the Soviet Union very much wanted major American participation—something that would be difficult to achieve if the United States was unsure of the performance of Soviet spacecraft.

In New York, I closely followed in the newspapers the reports on the loss of Phobos I and the troubled flight of Phobos II. The previous July, at the invitation of Roald Sagdeev, who was then the director of the Soviet Union's Space Research Institute, I had gone to Moscow to attend an institute conference that developed plans for the Mars '94 mission and was also attended by many of the Phobos scientists. For most of the preceding decade, Sagdeev had been not only the leader of the Soviet planetary program but also a sort of front-runner for *perestroika* and *glasnost*. He was responsible for the internationalization of the Vega and the

Phobos missions, and well before the July 1988 conference he had been trying, with mixed success, to get the engineers responsible for the Phobos spacecraft to do some restructuring of their own, with regard to their methods of operation.

THE Moscow conference had been timed to coincide with the launches of the two Phobos craft, and in the late afternoon of Thursday, July 7th, I joined one of three busloads of scientists who were being taken to the control center in Kaliningrad, an industrial city about fifteen miles north of Moscow, to watch the launch of Phobos I. A gentle rain was falling as we drove down Prospekt Mira, past the Space Obelisk—a soaring three-hundred-foot sweep of titanium depicting a rocket launch—and headed out of the capital. At length, we arrived at the center and drove into a brick-and-marble courtyard. The vast building, with its masonry shining in the rain, reminded me of an Italian Renaissance cathedral—the Duomo in Pisa, for instance, which one also comes upon suddenly in an enclosure in the middle of an urban landscape. And, in a way, the control center is very like a cathedral, not only because it is the visible manifestation of a blend of technology and high aspiration but also because it is meant to be a showplace—in this case, for the space program, the most spectacular of the Soviet Union's technologies.

The far end of the center's carpeted marble foyer was dominated by a huge mural, which depicted three figures flanked by columns of stars. They were the physicist and philosopher Konstantin Tsiolkovsky, who is generally regarded (in the Soviet Union if not yet in this country) as the father of space travel; Sergei Korolev, the great engineer of the Soviet space program; and Yuri Gagarin, who in 1961 became the first man to go into space. The three—presented in the mural as grandfather, father, and son—are the trinity of the Soviet space program. Under their gaze, we climbed a marble staircase and entered a large conference room, where we were addressed, in Russian, by the vice-director of the control center, an imposing gray-haired figure in civilian dress who introduced himself as General Egorov, and who would not have seemed out of place in the foyer iconography. He explained that post-

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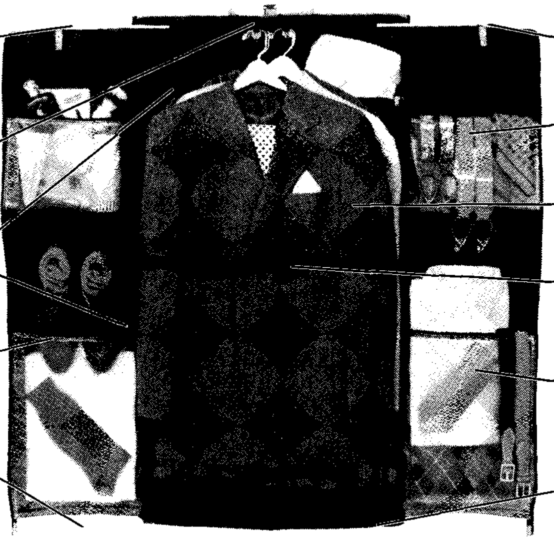

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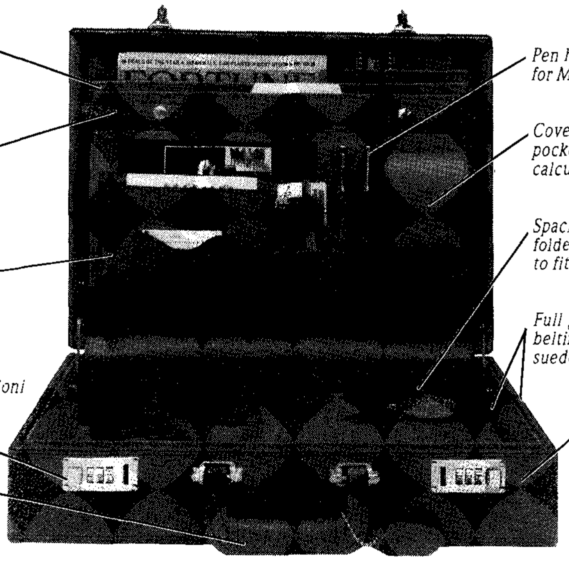

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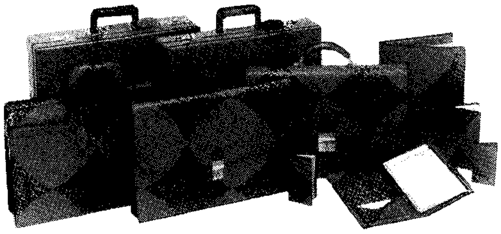

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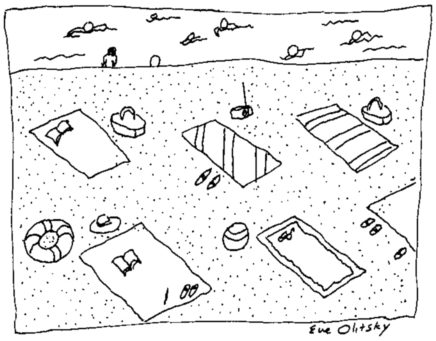
launch operations for all major manned as well as unmanned missions are controlled at Kaliningrad, and that its charges include the Mir space station and the Soyuz spacecraft, which ferries the cosmonauts to and from the Mir. After the general's remarks (which were translated for me by one of the American scientists—Louis Friedman, the executive director of the Planetary Society, in Pasadena), we walked through what seemed miles of marble corridors to the control room itself, a vast gold-and-white hall that—even more than the control room at the Johnson Space Center, in Houston—looks like a theatre auditorium. We filed into a balcony filled with rows of red plush seats. As at Houston, there were several large screens at the front of the hall; the largest, in the center, displayed the spacecraft's immediate post-launch trajectory, with the ignition of each of four successive rocket stages clearly marked, and to its left was a giant television picture of a Proton rocket on the launchpad at Baikonur. Above the screens was an array of digital countdown clocks. It was 9 P.M. in Kaliningrad, and—rain notwithstanding—the sky was still light, since in July the sun doesn't set until 11 P.M., but at Baikonur, which is three time zones to the east, it was midnight. The enormous white rocket, with its conical nose and its cluster of auxiliary rockets fastened like buttresses around its base, looked like a Byzantine tower. It was floodlit against the dark, and little was visible of the barren landscape beyond.

On the auditorium floor, a dozen or so flight controllers, indistinguishable from flight controllers at Houston except for a greater formality of dress, sat at consoles. Though they were monitoring the spacecraft's systems, they were not actually in control of any of them; at the moment, Phobos I was being run out of Yevpatoriya. There was more action in the balcony, where General Egorov was giving an impromptu televised press conference, than on the huge screens or on the floor. Roald Sagdeev was watching the launch back at the Space Research Institute. Earlier that day, when he heard that Phobos I had been cleared for launch, he had reportedly crossed himself. Although this act was doubtless performed in the spirit in which an American might knock wood, the scientist who told me about it said that such a gesture would not have been possible in the Soviet Union two years before.

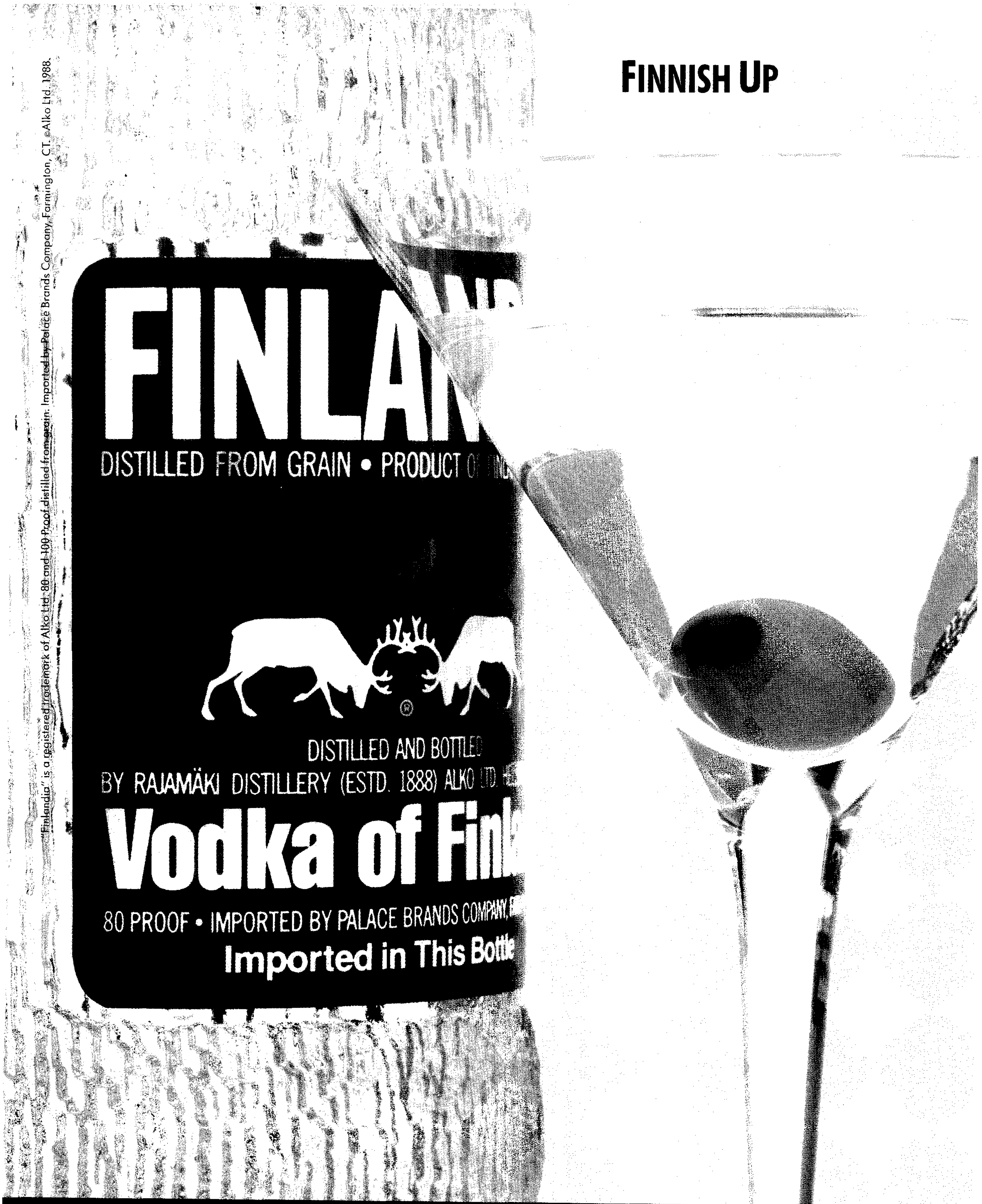
The spacecraft itself, of so much concern to Sagdeev and the rest of the scientists, was out of sight, inside the nose cone of the rocket. A few days earlier, I had seen a full-size working model of it in a clean room at the institute, where the mission's various scientific teams were checking their instruments. At its base was a small rocket surrounded by a ring of bulbous white fuel tanks, and above these rose a silvery cylinder about fifteen feet high. A pair of black solar panels were mounted, like wings, on the cylinder, just above the fuel tanks. Atop the cylinder was a white conical cap with a dish antenna cocked at a jaunty angle from its peak. Many of the scientific instruments—mass spectrometers, cameras, plasma detectors, and the like—were attached to the undersides of the solar panels, where they would be able to look down at Phobos during the encounter; the spacecraft was to float over the moon's surface for a period of twenty-five minutes. Two smaller craft were attached to the upper part of the cylinder; these were the hopper and the lander. (Phobos I carried only the lander, but both craft were aboard Phobos II, which would be launched five days later.) They would be dropped to the surface at the end of the encounter. The lander would stay put, radioing back information about the soil and seismic activity for a year, but the hopper would bounce across the surface to analyze the soil in a variety of places.

Anyone who has read "The Little Prince," by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, will feel a certain familiarity with Phobos. The moonlet resembles a baked potato, like the Little Prince's planetoid, but it is larger than that orbiting domain, being some sixteen miles in length. It is virtually black, as if it had been kept in the oven too long. Any Little Prince on Phobos would have to walk in gingerly fashion, for Phobos has next to no gravity: the least spring in his step could throw him hundreds of yards, or perhaps off the moonlet altogether. Phobos exerts a gravitational pull only one three-hundredth that of our own moon and one two-thousandth that of Earth; a man who weighed two hundred pounds here would weigh just over an ounce and a half on Phobos.



Unlike the Little Prince's home, Phobos has no volcano—or, indeed, much in the way of internal warmth—but it does have a large crater, called Stickney, which is six miles across and which stood out in pictures of Phobos taken in 1976 and 1977 by our two Viking spacecraft. Stickney was named for the wife of the American astronomer Asaph Hall, who discovered Phobos and Deimos in 1877, a year (like 1988) when Mars was at its closest approach to Earth—approximately thirty-five million miles—which happens at intervals of about fifteen years. Hall had spent a great many cold nights looking through the United States Naval Observatory telescope for Martian satellites, and he finally gave up on finding any. His wife, born Chloe Stickney, insisted that he go back to the observatory for one more night, and that night he was successful. In addition to Stickney, Phobos has two other good-sized craters, each three miles in diameter, and there are also thousands of much smaller craters; like the large ones, they are impact craters, formed by meteors. Phobos is covered with a dusty regolith caused by continual meteoric battering. Because of the moonlet's low gravity, almost all the ejecta from these impacts flies off the surface altogether, but it goes into the same orbit around Mars that Phobos is in, and thus falls back onto Phobos in a constant rain. Phobos orbits Mars within a giant torus of this debris, like the "Peanuts" character Pigpen, who walks around inside a cloud of his own dirt.

Phobos is so close to Mars—only about thirty-six hundred miles above the planet, which it rounds every seven hours and thirty-nine minutes—that, because of tidal stress, it could not have formed in orbit. At this point, many scientists thought that Phobos was an asteroid that had been captured by Mars. Asteroids—rocky bodies of various size—orbit the sun in a broad ring between Mars and Jupiter. However,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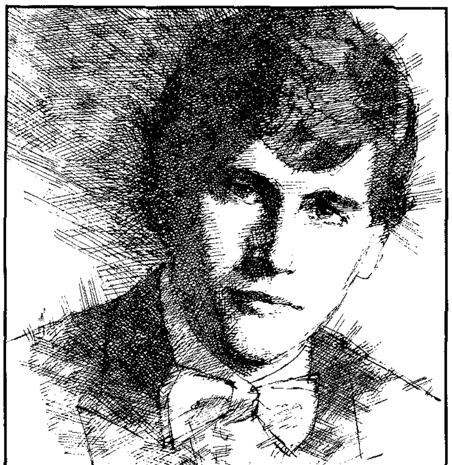

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because Phobos' orbit is very nearly circular, there were scientists who doubted the capture theory; captured bodies are usually in more elliptical orbits. Despite its remarkable circularity, Phobos' orbit is unstable. The little moon is winding downward, ever closer to Mars, and in a few tens of millions of years it should crash onto the planet, gouging out an oblong crater along the Martian equator.

The reason for the popularity of the captured-asteroid theory was that the available spectrographic data showed Phobos' chemical composition to be too unlike that of Mars for the moonlet to have formed at the same time or in the same place. Phobos has an extremely low reflectivity; indeed, it is one of the blackest objects in the solar system. Its spectrum closely resembled that of the carbonaceous chondrites, a type of asteroid that falls to Earth occasionally as a meteorite. While some asteroids are fragments of bodies large enough to have generated internal heat, thereby forming a variety of minerals and rock types, the carbonaceous chondrites are primitive material; that is, they have not melted since they condensed from the solar nebula, the huge cloud of gas from which the solar system formed. Bodies rich in carbon become increasingly common as you move outward across the asteroid belt toward Jupiter, because carbon could not have condensed to a solid at the high temperatures near the center of the solar nebula. Carbon was among the last elements to cool from the nebula; pea-size glassy objects (chondrules), whose origins are still obscure, formed in the hot mist of carbon, which eventually cooled and solidified around them. Carbonaceous chondrites are little pieces of the solar nebula frozen for all time—a primordial blizzard trapped in petrified fog.

In the opinion of many astronomers, the reason the bodies in the asteroid belt never got together to form a single planet, as bodies in other zones of the solar system did, was that the gravity of Jupiter perturbed their orbits. Instead of a sedate procession, the asteroid belt became an amusement-park ride—wildly elliptical, slopping over a huge volume of the solar system. Even today, castaways cross the orbits of Venus, Earth, and Mars. Phobos might have been one of them.

The instruments aboard the two Phobos spacecraft were designed to answer many of the questions about Phobos: Was it in fact a carbonaceous chondrite? How deep was its dust? At what rate was its orbit winding down toward the surface of Mars? However, the scientists in the control room at Kaliningrad were not altogether sure what instruments were aboard which craft. Each spacecraft was weighed before being loaded onto its Proton rocket; if it was over the weight limit instruments were taken off, but if it was under the weight limit additional instruments could be put on at the last minute. Such informality would never be tolerated by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, where for months, or even years, preceding a launch everyone knows—and has argued about—what is in every ounce of payload.

The Proton rocket continued to steam gently on the pad; like American countdowns, Soviet countdowns seem to last forever. On the assumption that a watched pot never boils, I chatted with Susan McKenna Lawlor, an Irish physicist, who was the leader of the team responsible for the SLED, a low-energy-particle detector that would be looking for ions trapped in the neighborhood of Mars. She told me she had been to Baikonur in May and had helped the Soviet technicians mount radioactive sensors on it and wrap it in a thermal blanket to protect it from the high temperatures at launch. As the rocket didn't seem to require our immediate attention, I asked her for her impressions of Baikonur.

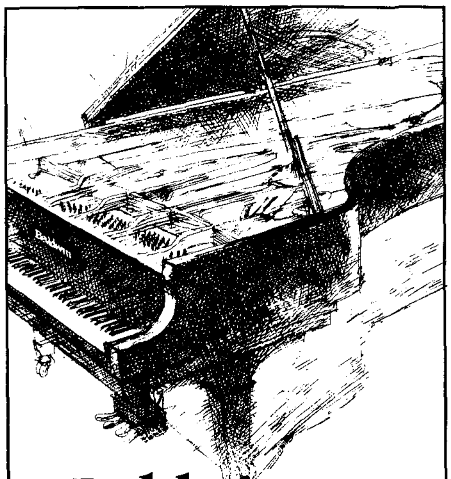
"It's a fascinating landscape," she said, in a lilting brogue. "The ground is clay of many different colors—yellows, reds, and whites. I could see camels on the outskirts of town, and many small animals, like prairie dogs. It's very dry, and the plants are low. Very different from Ireland, which is so green." She had been invited, she said, to watch a game of soccer on the grounds of the hotel where the cosmonauts usually stay. "I was wearing an elegant suit, but one of the teams asked me to join them anyway. I had never played soccer, but I took my place in the back row, and I ran, and I kicked. My teammates had never seen anything like it. Later, they went into the desert and picked a beautiful bouquet of desert tulips to present to me."

Almost without our noticing it, the white Proton rocket was enveloped in two bursts of flame and slid smoothly off the pad and into the black sky, the flames coalescing into a single, glowing knife blade, like the sword of a Jedi knight in the "Star Wars" trilogy. In the course of a minute, it dimmed and disappeared, and the Soviet television cameras on the scene panned to bleachers that had been set up several miles away for spectators, as is done at American launches. The audience at Baikonur seemed less emotional than ours, clapping as though it were at the ballet. Over the next half hour, successive rocket stages were jettisoned and ignited; on the control room's big central screen, a green light marked each event. At the ignition of the fourth, and final, stage, when the rocket was over the Chinese-Soviet border, a champagne cork popped, and some Austrian geochemists from one of the instrument teams filled several paper cups that they had lined up on the edge of the balcony. Dollops of champagne landed on the carpet. General Egorov scowled, whether because of the carpet or because of Gorbachev's strictures on alcohol (the effervescent scene in the balcony was being televised) was not clear. One difference between the launch of a spaceship and the launch of a seagoing one is that the champagne isn't wasted on the hardware.

THE Space Research Institute—familiarly known as IKI, which is its Russian acronym—occupies most of a huge concrete-and-glass barracks of a building several miles south of the Kremlin. The building is one of a cluster of similar structures separated by what would be lawns if anyone ever mowed them. One end of it appears to be held up by a couple of spindly columns of cinder blocks, not all of which are directly on top of one another. The IKI building is always a surprise to new visitors from NASA, who are accustomed to the expensive sleekness of their own laboratories. (Soviet space scientists, for their part, do not care for NASA's efficient, antiseptic architecture, which they find inhuman.) The conference meetings were held on the institute's second floor, in a big room outside Roald Sagdeev's office. Four rows of cut-glass chandeliers hung from the ceiling, and on the back wall was a plaque bearing a bronze relief of the head of Konstantin Tsiolkovsky, along with some celebrated words he wrote in 1911, in a letter to his publisher: "Humanity will not stay on Earth forever, but in pursuit of new frontiers will first penetrate timidly beyond the atmosphere and then will conquer for itself the rest of the planets around the sun."

Sagdeev, a sturdy and somewhat whimsical-looking man in his middle fifties, stood at a lectern at the front of the room to deliver the opening talk. He reminded the conferees that the Phobos mission had been announced only three and a half years before, when the Vega mission to Venus and Halley's Comet was launched. Three and a half years, he said, was a very short time to prepare so complex a mission; American missions, by contrast, usually took between five and ten years to prepare. "We did not know how to plan ahead," he said. "This is not a good way to make decisions. I may say that *perestroika* is helping us now. Six years in advance, Mars '94 is already in the works." Sagdeev emphasized that Mars '94—an even more complex undertaking—would need to benefit from what he regarded as some of the mistakes in planning the Phobos mission. Unlike NASA, which lets contracts after competitive bidding by many firms and therefore has considerable control over the design and the final product, the Soviet planetary program has no latitude with regard to suppliers. There is only one—the Babakin Center, a state-run manufacturer. As an illustration of his concern, Sagdeev cited the Phobos spacecraft's principal antenna, which was smaller than Vega's and had a data-return rate only one-fifteenth as fast; as a result, it would take about a month to transmit all the information from the Phobos flyby. Its deployment, he said, had been "the will of the manufacturer."

Later in the session, a representative of the Babakin Center came to the lectern to defend his institute. He explained that the antenna had been designed to make the spacecraft more maneuverable near Phobos, and he assured the scientists that they need not worry about the antenna for the Mars '94 mission, because on that flight maneuverability was not a factor. When I had an opportunity to ask Sagdeev about this, he agreed that there was a tradeoff between antenna size and maneuverability, but his point, he said,



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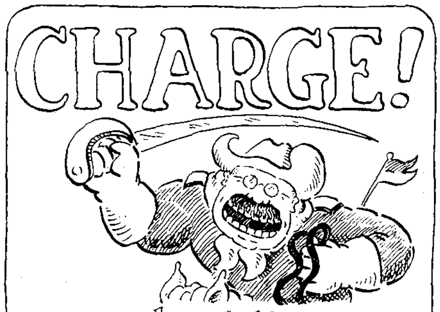

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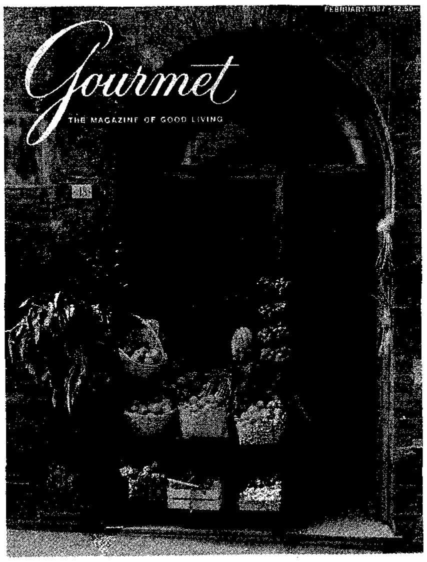

was that IKI had not been consulted. In his opinion, the Babakin engineers had been too conservative. "Our differences are ones that could have been solved by bargaining, and that is why we want access to more than one supplier," he said. "A market-oriented economy is what we want. And to avail ourselves of that we have to be able to plan far ahead. With Phobos, we were told, in effect, 'Here is what we have. Take it or leave it,' and we don't want that to happen again."

There was a story going around the conference which some scientists thought relevant to the Phobos antenna. Earlier that year, an American actor who was staying for several days at the National Hotel in Moscow kept ordering three-minute soft-boiled eggs for breakfast. Each morning, the waiter brought him thirty-minute eggs, and when the actor complained the waiter told him that three-minute eggs were not on the menu, only thirty-minute eggs. One morning, having heard this once too often, the actor hurled the hard-boiled eggs across the National's restaurant at the retreating waiter's back. As a result of the clash between Eastern bureaucracy and Western free enterprise, the police shut down the restaurant for several hours to conduct an investigation. It was this pervasive bureaucratic mind-set, common to waiters and high Party officials, and perhaps rooted deep in the Slavic soul, that Gorbachev and Sagdeev and others like them were trying so hard to change.

For Sagdeev, the antenna problem was just the tip of the iceberg. The Babakin Center is part of Glavkosmos, a huge and unwieldy agency roughly comparable to NASA, but a NASA plus much of the aerospace industry and minus the cosmonauts (who are under the Ministry of Defense) and the scientists (who are under the Academy of Sciences). In the United States, too, engineers usually have greater influence on a planetary mission than scientists do. But Glavkosmos and the Academy (of which IKI is a subsidiary) are highly competitive, and rivalry between government agencies, and between their dependent institutes, is far more intense in the Soviet Union than it is in this country. Moreover, *glasnost* and *perestroika* have penetrated much farther among Soviet scientists than among the engineers at Glavkosmos, many of whom are quite elderly; they are regarded by the scientists as being—in the current Soviet parlance—"stagnant."

"I'm surprised, Caswell. I thought you were a happy camper."

• •

Relations between the two groups had not always been so bad. Indeed, the Babakin Center's founder, G. N. Babakin, believed in a close partnership between scientists and engineers. So did Sergei Korolev, the chief designer of Soviet rockets, who in the early nineteen-sixties put G. N. Babakin in charge of the design of planetary spacecraft. The scientists and the group of engineers at the Babakin Center working in the early eighties on the Vega mission were very close. The engineers, who had worked together for over a decade on the Venera missions, knew the Vega spacecraft well. They were also responsive to the scientists' needs; at the scientists' request, they equipped Vega with a steerable instrument platform, so that cameras and other sensors could be aimed without changing the craft's orientation, and with a steerable antenna, so that the craft could change attitude without losing its radio link with Earth. The Vega engineers also allowed some of the spacecraft systems to be built outside the Babakin: the steerable platform was built at IKI, and the antenna was built at the Institute of Radio Electronics, another Academy of Sciences institute. Furthermore, the engineers were willing, in the interests of greater efficiency, to accept a Hungarian computer, which was superior to any that could be built in the Soviet Union.

After the Vega model was discontinued, however, its engineering team was disbanded; the Phobos craft was designed by a different group at the Babakin, who had had less experience in working with scientists. The new group made most of the design decisions themselves, after minimal consultation with the scientists. No doubt as a result, the Phobos spacecraft was originally designed for landing missions rather than for orbiting or flyby missions, which require a totally different type of craft. An early drawing of the craft shows it with legs, sitting on a cratered surface—an indication that the engineers did not discover until they were well into their work that the moonlet had too little gravity to hold the craft steady on the ground. The cylindrical shape, too, was typical of a lander, whose rockets (like those of a launch vehicle) have to be lined up with its long axis. Spacecraft designed for flyby or orbital missions are usually wider than they are high, to afford plenty of room at the bottom for instruments that have to be pointed toward the planet or moon being studied. Sagdeev and other scientists complained frequently to the Babakin Center that there wasn't enough room on

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the bottom of the Phobos craft for the instruments, and that the underside of the solar panels was not the best place for them. There was no steerable instrument platform. No spacecraft systems were built at scientific institutes, where there might have been greater expertise. In addition to choosing the small antenna, the engineers decided against making it steerable. They picked a Soviet computer.

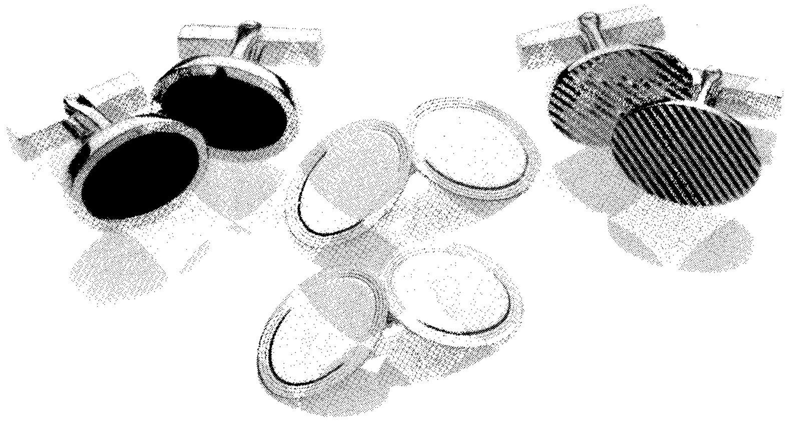
All in all, Phobos I and II were outstanding examples of what Sagdeev characterized as the "take it or leave it" attitude that *perestroika* is dedicated to erasing. *Perestroika*, though, can be something of a mixed blessing. Many people were beginning to question the wisdom of spending so much of the Soviet gross national product on space, and were doing so in *perestroika's* name. A number of Soviet scientists at the conference felt that if *perestroika* was going to be a major issue in the space program—with respect to either engineering management or criticism from politicians—Sagdeev's leadership would be badly needed. However, he had recently decided to retire as IKI's director. Ironically, his departure had been made necessary because of his devotion to *perestroika*. One of its fundamental principles is that an official ought to offer his resignation after ten years in a post, so that younger people can move up, and Sagdeev had been the director of IKI since 1973. "At the Party Conference, in June, a delegate asked, 'When does the clock start? Does it start now, or is it retroactive, to when you first took the post?' " he told me. "I answered the question—I said that it should be retroactive. Unfortunately, I was unanimously supported, and I have the moral duty to live up to what I suggested."

Sagdeev told me that he hoped to return to research, but some of his friends thought he had other ambitions, having to do with public policy; he was highly regarded by Gorbachev—indeed, he was one of the Soviet leader's chief advisers on space-related defense issues. Everyone I talked to, though, expressed the hope that he would continue to play a prominent role in the Mars program. It was an ambitious and expensive project, and someone of his stature and talents would be needed to plead its cause: Sagdeev is quick on his feet, and he is good at putting down opposition with gentle mockery. Toward the end of the conference, in honor of the successful launches, some West German scientists presented him with an object the size of a pumpkin and the color of a lump of coal—it was a detailed model of Phobos. Sagdeev held it aloft for all to see, and then said, "We must keep it hidden. If certain politicians saw it, they might say, 'If you know so well what Phobos looks like, why go there?' "

DURING the conference, I stayed at a hotel called the Academiciaskaya, which is where the Soviet Academy of Sciences puts up visitors. What it lacks in creature comforts it makes up for in camaraderie; the scientists staying there form a bond that comes from shared suffering occasioned by elevators that don't work, a surly staff that speaks only Russian and refuses to accept foreign traveller's checks or credit cards, and long lines at the ill-provisioned "buffeteria." That week, IKI tried to quarter a high-level delegation of NASA officials in the Academiciaskaya. The NASA executives protested so bitterly that they were shifted to the Rossiaya, a more elegant hostelry at the back of Red Square, beyond St. Basil's Cathedral—but not before they had threatened to wreak vengeance on a Soviet delegation that was expected in Washington soon afterward. While the matter was being resolved, the American delegates spent a long time trying to pick a hotel in Washington with as many negatives as the Academiciaskaya but were unable to think of one. Only the French, who among Western scientists have been on the closest terms with the Soviet space program, escaped the Academiciaskaya; they stayed at the National, which is a grand old hotel—whatever its boiled-egg policy—on Prospekt Marx, across from the Kremlin.

Every morning, buses picked us up outside the hotel for the twenty-minute trip to IKI. The conference proceeded rather as conferences I have attended at NASA have done—with scientists free to wander in and out of the sessions and talk to each other in the hallway. The talks were informal: visitors arriving for appointments with Sagdeev would greet their acquaintances in the audience, and perhaps shake hands with whoever was speaking, before disappearing down the corridor behind the lectern. Unlike scientific conferences at NASA, where at any given time at least half the participants are chatting around a big urn of coffee and paying scant attention to the official proceedings, coffee and tea were served only during morning and afternoon breaks, presumably to discourage delinquency. The scientists would line up in a long queue on these occasions, talking in many languages. Fortunately for a monolingual journalist from New York, there were plenty of interpreters, professional and amateur, and the most common language, in the coffee line and in the sessions themselves, was English—the lingua franca of international scientific gatherings.

Soviet and American planetary scientists have associated with each other—often developing close friendships—at least since 1972, when a space treaty between the two countries was signed which authorized various forms of data exchange and other joint projects for a five-year period. After renewing the treaty for another five years in 1977, the United States allowed it to lapse in 1982, as an expression of disapproval of Soviet actions in Poland, but the scientists on both sides—who, like scientists in general, identify with each other and regard themselves as part of a community that speaks the common language of science—continued to attend each other's meetings and kept their channels of communication open. The period when there was no treaty coincided with the Vega mission and much of the preparation for the Phobos mission, and NASA, which, in the absence of a treaty, could not participate in these missions directly, was of two minds about the collegiality demonstrated by Soviet and American space scientists; the contacts were useful, but at the same time NASA did not like ceding the initiative to another space program. In 1984, when Valery Barsukov, the director of the Vernadsky Institute of Geochemistry and Analytical Chemistry, and James Head, a planetary geologist at Brown University, organized a series of small semiannual symposia to be held alternately in the Soviet Union and Providence, both the United States government and the Soviet government were ambivalent. They eventually decided to turn a blind eye, provided that the meetings remained small, discreet, and productive, and the Brown-Vernadsky "micro-symposia" are credited with being a major catalyst in the eventual renewal of the space treaty, which was signed,



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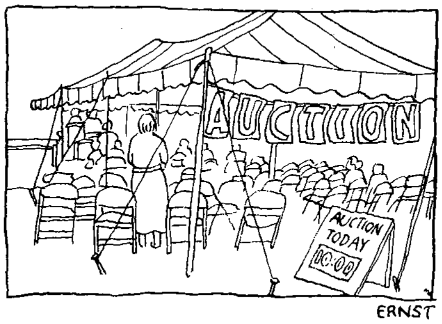
after only a week of negotiations, in 1987.

Glasnost, with its opening to the West in almost every field of human endeavor, may have received its initial push from Roald Sagdeev, when he decided to include Western scientists and instruments in the Vega mission. During the late Brezhnev years, ideas about opening the Soviet Union toward the West, and about restructuring Soviet society, were already prevalent among the intelligentsia, and Sagdeev, thanks to his contacts with the international scientific community, was ideally placed to put them into effect with respect to planetary science. In 1982, while Leonid Brezhnev was still alive, Sagdeev realized that Vega, with a slight tweak of its trajectory, could go on from Venus to fly by Halley's Comet. For the comet encounter, he needed different instruments, and he needed them quickly, because the launch was only two years off. The only place to get them was in the West, where they were already in existence. In 1983, he invited John Simpson, a physicist at the University of Chicago, to join Vega. Simpson, who had developed an instrument for counting small particles such as those emanating from a comet approaching the sun, was eager to do so, but neither the Soviet nor the American government would give overt approval. Sagdeev assigned Leonid Ksanfomaliti, a senior scientist at IKI, to work with Simpson, but since they could not meet in either country Ksanfomaliti—a courtly physicist given to wearing neatly pressed light-blue T-shirts—arranged a meeting in Budapest. With our government's grudging approval, IKI had Simpson's instrument in three months. (Circumventing sticky government regulations is something that most planetary scientists have learned to do. A year or so after his meeting with Simpson, Ksanfomaliti, by then well versed in the arts of diplomacy, travelled to the Centre Nationale d'Études Spatiales, in Paris, taking his Phobos instrument—an infrared spectrometer and radiometer called the KRFM—with him. It was confiscated by French customs. The French scientists who had come to meet him were furious, and they returned to customs every day for ten days in an attempt to retrieve it, without success. "Finally, I go myself and give them chocolates," Ksanfomaliti told me. "Then it's O.K.")

Sagdeev, a modest man, tends to play down his role in the initiation of *glasnost*. "It was a coincidence," he told me. "When we needed *glasnost* for our small project, we had to fight every step for it. The communications lines alone—the lines we needed into foreign laboratories and NASA's deep-space tracking network—were difficult to establish. The people who resisted were not hostile—they were nice people, good people, but they did not see why all this should be done. There was nothing in our culture to convince them." After the Vega launch, when Sagdeev mentioned to a group of Soviet officials that there were several Western instruments, including an American one, aboard the spacecraft, they said, "Are you mad?" By this time, Brezhnev had died, and so had his successor, Yuri Andropov. The new general secretary, Konstantin Chernenko, had to be briefed by his aides on what Sagdeev had done. They anxiously awaited his response, which was some time in coming, as Chernenko was a sick man. "Oh, is good," he finally replied—at least, that is what a Russian scientist, in his serviceable English, told me he said. When Gorbachev became general secretary—in 1985, a year before Vega's encounter with Halley's Comet—Sagdeev informed him that the Soviet spacecraft whose name was splashed across the front pages of the world's newspapers was full of foreign instruments. Gorbachev was delighted and awarded IKI the Order of Lenin.

Internationalism in space is a more prickly issue in the United States than it is in the Soviet Union. Many American scientists feel that NASA is as ambivalent about their coöperation with the Soviets today as it was before the new space treaty was signed. Because of a fear of technology transfer, the Departments of Defense and Commerce have also expressed misgivings—misgivings that American scientists tend to feel are exaggerated. Our government allowed no American instruments aboard Phobos. Americans who wanted to participate in the mission's planning stages could do so only as members of European teams—a somewhat ineffective policy, since the Europeans supplied instruments for Phobos which were as advanced as ours, and in some cases more advanced, and the Americans were there to share their knowledge with their European teammates, who might be expected to pass it on to Soviet colleagues.



Many of the American scientists at the conference had stories to tell about how Sagdeev had invited them and their instruments aboard Phobos and how the Reagan Administration had thwarted them. They were full of admiration for the imaginativeness and daring of the mission, which they felt reflected the vigor of the Soviet space program as a whole. Because the Soviets launch a great many more spacecraft than we do, they attempt bolder missions and take more risks, at least with their unmanned craft. Moreover, Soviet planetary spacecraft have as a rule been much simpler and less expensive than American ones (Phobos being something of an exception). Thanasis Economou, a University of Chicago physicist and a co-investigator for an alpha-backscattering instrument that was to analyze the elements on the surface of Phobos, told me that NASA sometimes overstressed reliability and performance, making a mission and everything aboard it too costly in the end. "NASA wants to be sure an experiment will work, and work for a long time," he said. "The Soviet Union spends less time and money on a mission. If everything works, fine, but if not, it doesn't matter—there will always be another mission. NASA's method is best for things like Voyager, where you want instruments to run well for a decade or more. For some other missions the Soviet approach is more sensible." During the ten years or so that it can take to prepare an American mission, he said, a lot of enthusiasm is lost; the fast-paced Soviet style of planning breeds an excitement lacking in most American missions.

"We plan and plan and plan and don't commit," Arden Albee, of the California Institute of Technology, complained to me. "Can you imagine NASA doing the little hopper on Phobos? Or flying a spacecraft no more than fifty metres above an unknown moon's surface?" Albee had reason to grumble, being the chief scientist for America's Mars Observer mission, which NASA had originally scheduled for launch this year and will be lucky to get off in 1992. It will carry French radio equipment for communication with the Soviet Mars '94 balloons, and some scientists were already worrying about the 1990 date. The malaise among American planetologists that summer was due in part to the fact that the United States had not launched a planetary mission in more than a decade—a long spell ashore that ended in May, 1989, with the launch of our Magellan spacecraft to Venus.

American space science was not entirely in eclipse at the conference, however; at the time, Voyager II, which had been touring the outer planets along with its sister ship, Voyager I, was nearing Neptune, the last of its targets. The encounter was still a year away, but already pictures were streaming in to the Voyager control center, at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, in Pasadena. Bradford Smith, the leader of Voyager's imaging team, was at the conference—he was on the Phobos imaging team—and one day during a lull in the proceedings he produced a few of the latest images of Neptune and Triton, its largest moon. Since those two objects were still some five hundred million miles ahead of Voyager, what one saw was a fuzzy blue-green ball with a much smaller fuzzy pinkish ball alongside it; still, here was something accomplished amid the talk of achievements to come. A crowd of scientists converged on Smith to get a look, and all of them wanted copies.

For the last few days of the conference, the scientists broke up into groups to consider various aspects of the Mars '94 mission. Lou Friedman, of the Planetary Society, invited me to attend a workshop of the balloon group—the society, which acts as a catalyst for Soviet-American coöperation in space, was assisting in the design and engineering of the instrument package the balloons would carry—but he had forgotten to tell me where the group was meeting, so I had to poke around the institute looking for it. That was not as difficult as one might imagine. IKI, I discovered, was extremely open to journalists—more so, in some ways, than a comparable NASA installation. During the conference, I was able to wander virtually everywhere in the building. *Glasnost* is so fresh in the Soviet Union that the Soviets have embraced it unequivocally; to them openness is simply that—openness. They have not yet had a chance to develop the inhibitions, the reservations, and the semantic defenses that have been developed over the centuries by Westerners, who are not necessarily always as open as they pretend to be. (One American reporter I met at IKI, who had just returned from Baikonur, had been invited there by a Soviet general to attend a meeting of Soviet and American Air Force officials coincident with the launch of Phobos I; when a high-ranking general of the United States Air Force became aware of the reporter's presence, he had him thrown out of the meeting.) In the old days, the Soviets had no need to adopt Western subtleties—a simple "*nyet*" would do. Indeed, the one area in which the Soviet space program today is light-years behind the American one is in dealing with a curious public; it has never had a public-relations department, whereas the amount of money that NASA has spent on public relations would probably pay for a trip to the moon. When I was at IKI, several young women were busy setting up IKI's first public-relations department. They pumped me about how NASA's Public Affairs Office worked, and I told them what I knew, feeling rather as if I were revealing the last secrets of the American space program. They were extremely helpful to me; public relations in the Soviet Union is still in the formative stage, and managing the news is less important than simply giving reporters the information they need. However, none of them knew where the balloon people were meeting.

AFTER the conference was over, I hired an Intourist car and driver to take me to Kaluga, a city about ninety miles southeast of Moscow, where Konstantin Tsiolkovsky spent the last four decades of his long life. A friend of mine named Dmitri Urnov, who edits a scholarly journal called "Problems in Literature," came with me. Dmitri, an ebullient man in his early fifties, has an ancestral connection with the space program: his maternal grandfather, B. N. Worobieff, was an aeronautical engineer who, in the decade before the Russian Revolution, designed the first industrially manufactured aircraft in Russia and on the side edited *Herald*

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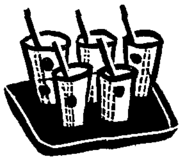
of Flying, the publication of the Russian Technological Society. In 1911, Worobieff received a letter from Tsiolkovsky, then an unknown professor of physics at a school in Kaluga, describing his work on rocketry and containing the famous prophecy inscribed (among other places) on the back wall of the conference room at IKI—a dictum generally regarded as signalling the space age. Later that year, Worobieff published an article by Tsiolkovsky discussing the use of rockets for space travel and suggesting that men could live happily in weightlessness. It created a sensation at the time, but such was the slow pace of the early days of rocketry that twenty years later, when Tsiolkovsky wrote to Stalin offering his papers to the state, no one in the Kremlin knew who he was. Stalin's aides had to seek out Dmitri's grandfather, the editor of the by then defunct *Herald of Flying*, and ask him for information.



Tsiolkovsky died shortly before the beginning of the Second World War, and early in the war one of his younger colleagues—many of whom later became scientists and engineers in the Soviet space program—sent his papers for safekeeping to Worobieff's house in Moscow, where my friend Dmitri spent most of his childhood. Tsiolkovsky had been a prolific writer, proposing designs for aircraft as well as spacecraft (one of his schemes was to make huge dirigibles of corrugated metal), and Dmitri spent most of the war years with the Tsiolkovsky archives piled up around him. "They filled the front hall, which already contained my grandfather's library of early aeronautical literature and books on ballooning," he told me, as we drove through the lush green rolling countryside. "The housekeeper—who later became my grandfather's second wife—used the covers of the boxes as tables when she was making bread, and she often set the hot teakettle on the metal dirigible models. They were flat and pointed at both ends, like kayaks, and they made excellent trivets. I played with them as toys. So it was all very homelike, and at the same time rather fantastic."

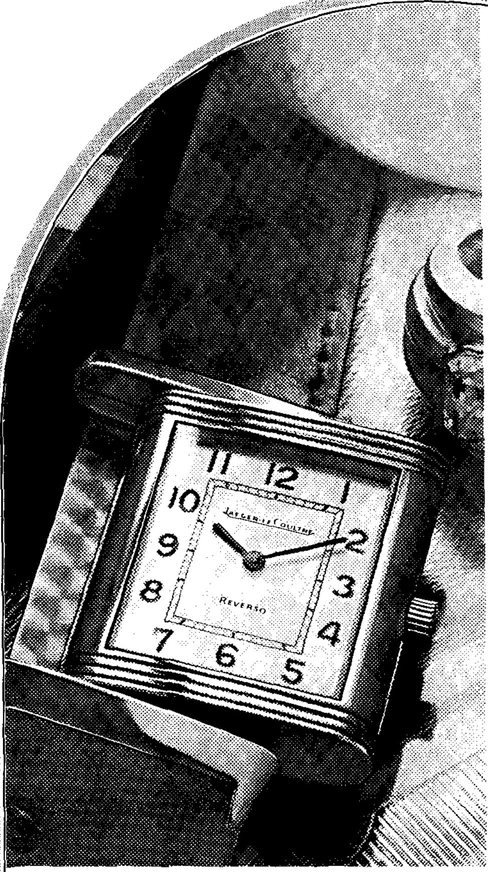
Kaluga, a hilly city of two hundred and sixty-five thousand people, overlooks the Oka River, a broad stream that eventually winds into the Volga. Driving along a wide, old-fashioned boulevard, we passed the school where Tsiolkovsky had taught—a three-story building of rosy brick with white limestone trim. In his day, it was known as the Ladies Parish Local School, but it has since been renamed the Tsiolkovsky School. A few blocks beyond it, a long, shady lane descended to the Oka; this was the street where Tsiolkovsky had lived—then Cow Street, now Tsiolkovsky Street. Tsiolkovsky had had two houses on Cow Street. The first, which he moved into in 1904 and lived in for the next twenty-nine years, was down by the river, and the second house was up at the other end of the street. The second house had been given to him by the government—after Worobieff identified him for Stalin—and he lived there until his death, in 1935. Dmitri directed the driver to stop in front of this house, a brown clapboard cottage of a sort common in rural Russia, with white gingerbread trim around the windows. Tsiolkovsky's two surviving granddaughters and the son and grandsons of one of them still live there.

We were greeted at the door by a blond woman in her middle sixties in a blue-and-red print dress. This was the younger granddaughter, Maria Veniaminovna Samburova, and she showed us into a comfortable and cluttered parlor, where she introduced her sister, Vera Veniaminovna. Dmitri embraced the two sisters, whom he hadn't seen in many years, and Maria told me that I was the first American to visit the "new" house. Maria's son, Sergei, a slender blond man in his early thirties, was introduced and pulled up chairs for us, while his sons, Kostya and Mischa, who had broad, round Russian faces and blond hair like their father and grandmother, jumped into their grandmother's lap. On the wall behind them was a painting of Tsiolkovsky, an imposing, bearded figure wearing a black cape over a gray suit. The room was full of family photographs, many of them taken by Tsiolkovsky, who was fond of cameras. On a shelf across from where we were sitting was a dried ball of tumbleweed, which Sergei had brought back from the cosmodrome at Baikonur, on the sun-parched steppes of Kazakhstan. He told me—with Dmitri's help as an interpreter—that he was an engineer and that he had applied to be a cosmonaut but had been rejected and instead had been for several years a flight controller at the Kaliningrad control center.

Maria, who did nearly all of the talking, told me, through Dmitri, what she remembered of her grandfather. He was by no means as stern as he looked in his portrait, she said, though he did insist on such virtues as promptness. "I remember him as a good, kind grandfather," she said. "When he was younger, though, and bringing up his own children, life was hard for him, and he was a strict parent. Life had always been hard for him. He was the fifth child in a large family, and his father was a gamekeeper. There was never much money."

Tsiolkovsky was born in September, 1857, in Izhevskoye, a town not far from Kaluga. At the age of nine, he caught a cold on a sleigh ride, and it turned into scarlet fever. He suffered a partial hearing loss and almost died; he remained exceedingly deaf for the rest of his life. Because of his deafness, he had to leave school, and from then on he was self-educated. At twelve or thirteen, he read about sextants, made one of his own, and used it to calculate the distance from a water tower to his house; when he measured the distance and found that he was right, he developed a faith both in theoretical science and in his own abilities as a craftsman. At sixteen, he went to Moscow to study—not at a university but by reading books on physics, astronomy, and mathematics at the Chertkov Library (now the Lenin Library) of the Rumyantsev Museum, a huge classical building across from the Kremlin, and by attending lectures at various institutions across the city. He spent very little money on food (ninety kopecks a month), and he is said to have turned black from malnutrition. This condition so alarmed his family that he was brought home. In 1879, when he was twenty-two, he got a job teaching mathematics, algebra, and geometry at Borovsk, another town in the district. In 1892, he moved to Kaluga to teach at the Ladies Parish Local School; he was now married, and he and his family lived in a series of apartments until he scraped together enough money to buy the house at the foot of Cow Street.

By the time his grandchildren came along, life had become a little easier for him. "He would tell us about the movements of the planets, and he made each



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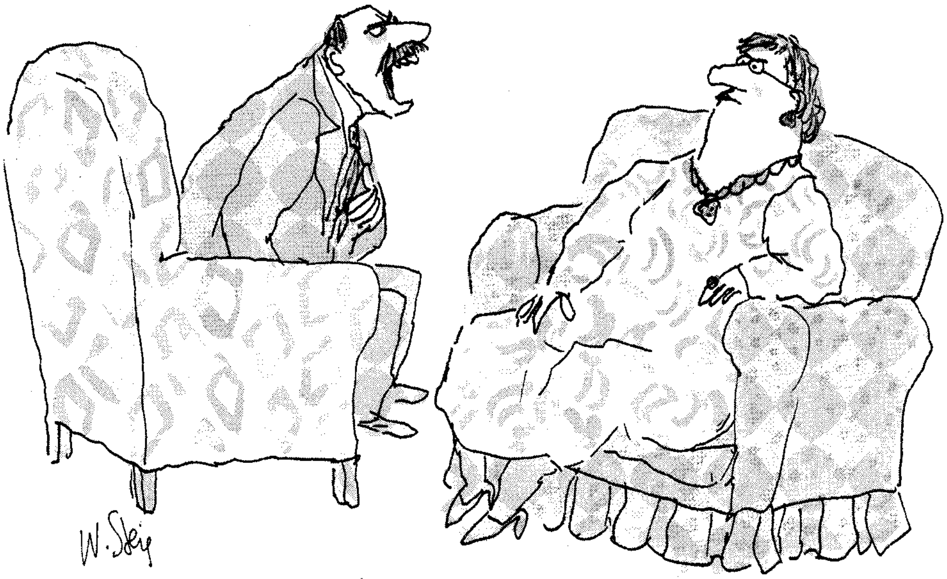

"All right, I'm wrong! Shall I kill myself?"

grandchild take the part of a planet," Maria said. "He used to do experiments with us. Some of the experiments he showed the older boys had to do with electricity—I remember him putting silver coins in a tank of water, turning the handle of a generator, and telling the boys, 'Pick up the coins and you can have them for yourselves.' Usually the boys got the coins, despite the electricity. I wanted to try, and he finally let me, turning the handle very slowly. But the shock made me cry. He was very much upset. He picked me up and said, 'Don't cry! Have the coin, have your sweet, but don't cry!' He taught us about weightlessness. He didn't get very technical, since we were really very small; he simply conveyed the *idea* of weightlessness by lifting us up and throwing us in the air. Most of the time, though, he was very busy, and the things I remember I remember because they were rare. He spent almost all his time on his work. Many of the early pioneers of space came to visit him. When we were living in the old house, his study was upstairs, and we were not allowed into it. We would creep up the stairs and listen outside the door to his conversations about space. He couldn't hear us, of course—he was too deaf. He loved to read, and he encouraged us to read. He was very fond of fiction—particularly of adventure tales—and he gave us books by Scott, Cooper, Stevenson, and Verne. He also wrote some science fiction himself."

Tsiolkovsky's writings on space, both technical and fictional—about thirty-five books, pamphlets, and articles in all—are carried aboard the Mir space station. When I asked Sergei what he thought was his great-grandfather's most important contributions to spaceflight, and why Tsiolkovsky was so revered, he replied, "He was the first to conceive of the rocket—which had been invented long before, in China, for other purposes—as a means of going into space. When others suggested that rockets in space might be good weapons, he resisted the idea. He was the first to think of space from a humanitarian point of view—to have the idea that human beings might not only explore space but move there, because space provided more opportunities for growth. He invented the idea of space stations and space habitats. He saw that you might grow food in them, and that a tremendous source of power, in the form of sunlight, was available there. He even thought of making gravity artificially, by rotating the station, because he thought that man might not be able to live in weightlessness for long periods." Sergei Korolev, on his way to Baikonur for the launch of Sputnik, in 1957, made a pilgrimage to the old house by the river, which had by then become what it is now—a Tsiolkovsky museum. Cosmonauts and space officials visit it every year on Tsiolkovsky's birthday, and many of the family photographs show Maria and other relatives with these men.

Sergei accompanied us down the street to his great-grandfather's old house. Two busloads of schoolchildren were leaving just as we arrived. Russians are particularly fond of house museums; they are firm believers that history is moved by human beings. Although Communism attempted to eradicate the cult of the individual, the hero has remained alive and well in the Soviet Union. Our own historians have largely succeeded in replacing the great-man school of history with the study of social trends, and one reason that many Americans are so responsive to the Soviet people may be that we see in them an earlier, less complicated version of ourselves—from a time when we, too, saw the individual as playing a larger, more determining role in society. Poor Robert Goddard, the solitary and secretive father of American rocketry! No one beats a path to his home, in Worcester, Massachusetts.

We followed Sergei into the living room, which in the first few years after Tsiolkovsky moved in had doubled as his study and workshop. His grandchildren slept on couches there, except in winter, when the house was too cold; then they would sometimes sleep in the kitchen, near (or even on) a Dutch stove. There was a piano against one wall, which he had bought for his daughters just before the First World War; in spite of being partly deaf, he was very musical. He loved clocks with chimes, too, and often made the chimes himself, turning them out on a lathe. He also made a variety of ear trumpets; they looked like giant funnels, and the later ones are conspicuously larger than the early ones. He liked to say that they were the only useful thing he ever made; he claimed that they were so effective that he had to warn children not to talk as they walked along the street outside his house, lest he hear their secrets.

In 1908, following a flood of the Oka River which ruined the interior of the house—the wallpaper fell off in sheets—Tsiolkovsky added a second floor. He built the staircase to the measure of his own stride; as he was tall, the risers were very high, and the rest of his family and most of the guests found it difficult to climb. On the second floor, he built himself a study overlooking the river. He was always willing to talk with strangers who were seriously interested in his work, usually sending them off to the bookstore to buy his books. A yellow armchair and a

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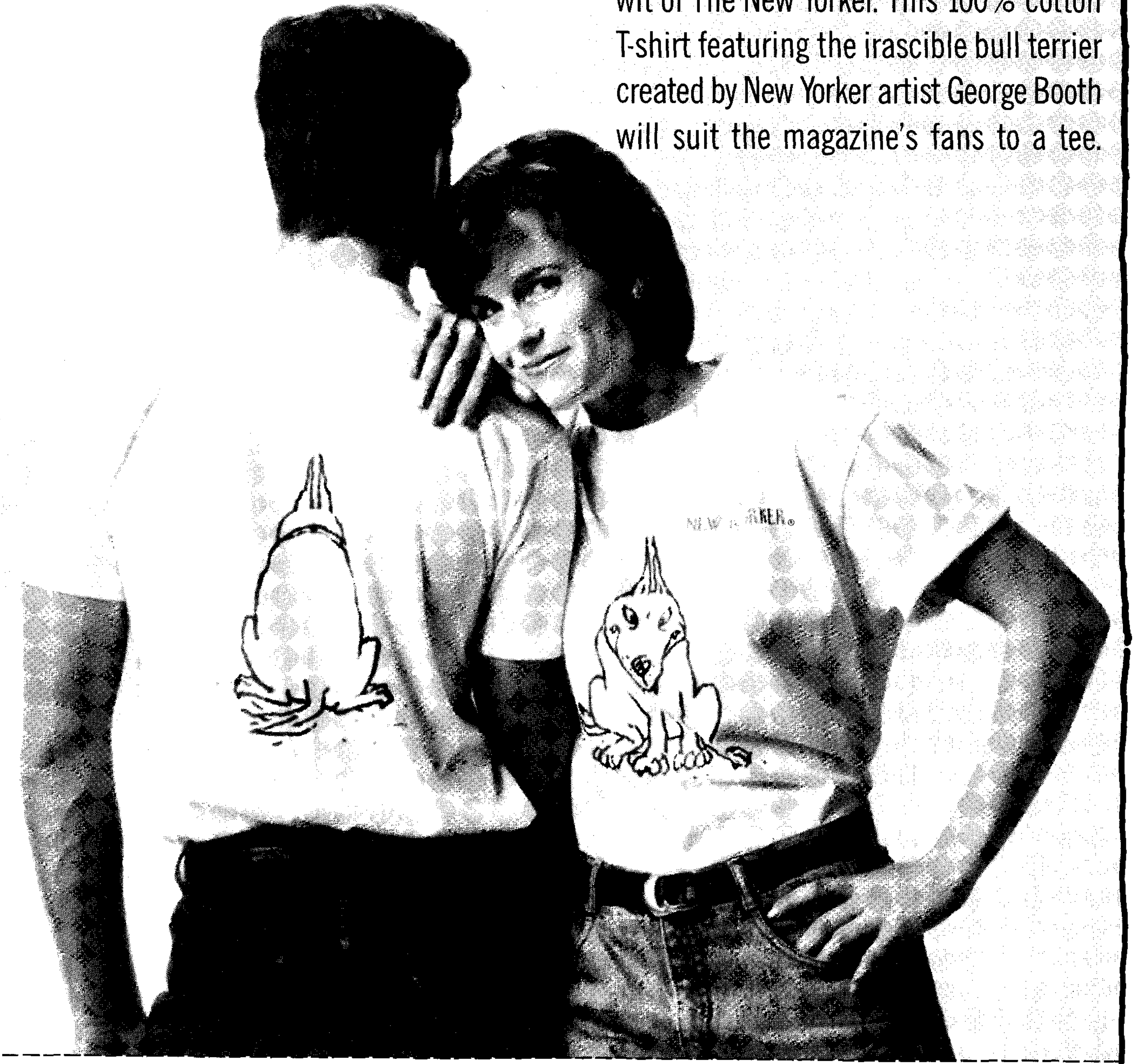

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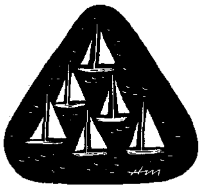
bentwood chair were drawn up in front of a big wooden desk, and there were a couple of ear trumpets within reach, as if he had just been entertaining a visitor. On a tripod to the right of the desk was a telescope.

Beyond the study was his workshop, a many-windowed room of unpainted wood, which contained his lathes and other tools. On the wall above the windows hung a couple of the metal dirigibles that Dmitri had played with. Their skins were corrugated so that when the dirigibles were inflated—with a needle-nosed pump, *of the sort used for* inflating footballs, which was still on his workbench—they would expand slightly. The models were designed not to fly but to be tested aerodynamically in a wind tunnel that Tsiolkovsky had built (the first in Russia). Sometimes he tested them by dropping them off the roof; a large door at one end of the workshop led out onto it. He would take his telescope out there occasionally to look at the stars. On a visit to the house, Alexei Leonov, the first man to walk in space, is said to have remarked, “Different doors led us into space, but if it were not for this door there would not have been the other doors—no Sputnik, no Gagarin.” Sergei told me that when Yuri Gagarin came back from his historic flight he said, “When I went into space, there were no surprises, because it was just like Tsiolkovsky’s books,” and that Germain Titov, the second cosmonaut in space, said, “The first man in space was Tsiolkovsky, for he described exactly what it is like.” Later, on the flyleaf of one of Tsiolkovsky’s books, I saw a graceful note inscribed by Neil Armstrong, the first man on the moon, which rang much the same note as his Soviet counterparts had: “It was my great privilege to participate in part of the realization of this dream—at Tranquillity Base, 1969.”



ON January 29, 1989, Phobos II fired its main rocket, to slow down so that it could go into orbit around Mars. Despite the problems *with some of its systems*, Phobos II’s interplanetary cruise had been a smooth one. Two anticipated slight midcourse corrections in the hundred-and-eighteen-million-mile journey had been made, but a third had been omitted, because the craft’s trajectory was so accurate. Before the January 29th maneuver, Phobos II had been in orbit around the sun; its Martian orbit was highly elliptical, the lowest point being some five hundred and forty miles above the planet and the highest some fifty thousand miles out in space. (Imagine trying to catch a baseball that is travelling a hundred miles an hour, and almost having your arm yanked off, and you have a basic understanding of the dynamics of capture by a planet’s gravity of an object at solar-orbiting speed.) The spacecraft’s rocket was fired again on *February 12th, raising the* orbital low point to thirty-seven hundred miles—approximately a hundred miles outside the moon’s orbit. Then, six days later, the rocket was fired a third time, to circularize the craft’s orbit at that height. During this period, and for much of the rest of February, the engineers were worried about an unsettling series of events in the onboard computer system. First one and then another of the three parallel computers began switching off for brief periods. The brief shutdowns could have been caused by—among other things—short circuits, interruptions in the electrical current, or even solar flares. Restart was automatic, but each restart would put the computer temporarily out of synchronization with the other two. The scientists got wind of these problems, but they were not given any details by the engineers.

Despite repeated restarts, the approach to Phobos continued. The little moon’s position was known only within a range of twenty miles—not a great enough degree of accuracy to enable the spacecraft to carry out an automated flyby fifty metres above the surface. The spacecraft itself had to supply the information needed to further refine the moon’s orbit, and this meant that the ground had to know the precise position of the craft. Phobos II was being tracked by Soviet and French groups, and by the European Space Agency, but most importantly by NASA’s deep-space network, which is based at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory. The Soviets had placed a transponder aboard the spacecraft to mirror signals transmitted from the network’s worldwide system of antennas; by using these signals, with quasars as reference points, J.P.L. was able to get an accurate fix on the spacecraft’s position. With the spacecraft as a fixed point in the sky, the Soviet flight controllers could use its cameras to pinpoint the moon’s position: they would command the cameras to take pictures of the moon, and if it was not in the center of the picture the controllers would compute the course corrections needed to center the moon’s image and would order the spacecraft to make the corrections with its thrusters. The spacecraft would move closer, and the process would be repeated until Phobos’ position was known within a few hundred yards—accurately enough so that *the craft’s automatic-guidance system* could conduct the encounter. The first of four imaging sessions, each to last about two hours, took place on February 28th; for each session, the spacecraft would have to shift away from its orientation toward Earth and the sun. In the images from the first session, Phobos appeared neatly in the center of the frame, right where it ought to be. But the approach was taking a little longer than had been expected, and the March date for the encounter had slipped into April; the tentative date was April 9th. For the next three weeks, no science commands were sent up to the onboard computer system, so that the system could have a rest and so that the flight controllers would have time to run some tests to find the source of the restart problems.

The twenty-five-minute encounter would be the period of highest activity by far on the entire nine-month mission. During the encounter, Phobos II would move at about ten miles an hour, with its cameras and the other instruments on the undersides of the solar panels pointed toward the moonlet’s sunlit surface. Because all its power would be needed for the instruments, unnecessary systems, including communications, would be turned off; all data would be recorded for later playback. Phobos II would fly over an array of parallel grooves antipodal to Stickney; many of the scientists believed that the grooves had been formed by shock waves that propagated through the moon after the impact that created the giant crater. The craft would not pass over Stickney itself, which is on the side of Phobos that always faces Mars. (Like our own moon, Phobos is in tidal lock with its planet.) The spacecraft would be guided by its radar and its altimeters, which together would “read” the terrain; the onboard computer would use this information to keep the craft at the fifty-metre altitude. When it approached a mountain, it would ascend, tipping so that its vertical axis pointed straight to the ground, whatever the slope. When it flew above a crater, it would descend and then fly up the other side.

If sound travelled in a vacuum, the visiting craft would probably sound like one of those fussy little droids from "Star Wars," and it would certainly look like one. It would hiss as its thrusters fired to keep it in the proper orientation. It might rock as it went up a hill, until the thrusters stabilized it. It would click as various instruments made their measurements. Every few seconds, there would be pulses of light and puffs of dust as a laser zapped the surface to vaporize a pinch of dust for analysis. The cameras—there were three of them—would provide a huge assortment of images at various angles and resolutions. Periodically, the little droid would stop and turn in a complete circle, to allow its cameras a panoramic view.

Just before the end of the encounter, the hopper and the lander would be launched by means of springs, arcing down to land gently on the moon's surface. A harpoon protruded from the bottom of the lander; the harpoon would penetrate the ground, and the lander would reel itself in on a long string. The hopper, which was the size and shape of a bowling ball with one flat side, would roll for a while before coming to a stop, and then long, spidery legs would unfold and right it onto its flat side. After a twenty-minute pause during which onboard instruments would make their measurements, the legs would fold up, springs would fire inside its body, and it would jump to another spot—a leap about ten yards high and twenty yards long. It might make twenty such hops, zigzagging across grooves and craters like a frog that had lost its way. (Indeed, the inspiration for the hopper had been a toy frog, operated by squeezing a rubber bulb, that belonged to an IKI scientist.) If all went well, the flyby would be one of the more productive twenty-five minutes in the history of spaceflight.

ON March 20th, when the encounter was about three weeks away, I drove up to Providence, Rhode Island, for the ninth Brown-Vernadsky microsymposium. (The sponsors' names are reversed in each country; when the conference is held in the Soviet Union, it is known as the Vernadsky-Brown microsymposium.) Many of the Soviet scientists I had seen the previous summer at the IKI conference came to Providence; it was a virtual extension of the summer's gathering, and the best place to be to keep in touch with the Phobos mission. The meetings were held in a ground-floor lounge in Brown's Graduate Center, a modern, efficient-looking structure that is the architectural antithesis of IKI. The scientists could choose between listening to papers being delivered at the front of the room and talking to each other over coffee in the back. About eighty scientists were there; the microsymposia are not as micro as they were before the 1987 space treaty was signed. Whenever the chatter in the back of the room began to drown out the speaker, members of the audience would turn around and shush people, the sibilant exclamation sounding the same in Russian as it does in English.

Roald Sagdeev was not among the visiting Soviet scientists. He was in Washington. Meanwhile, partisans of his in the Academy of Sciences were vigorously campaigning to put him on the ballot for election to the new Congress of People's Deputies. He had been much in the news in America during the fall and winter. In October, a month after the loss of Phobos I, he delivered a speech that made headlines by referring to Alexander Dunayev, the head of Glavkosmos, as an "odious figure." In November, he resigned the directorship of IKI, as he had promised to do, and the physicist Alec Galeev, a former student of his, replaced him. Though there continued to be considerable uncertainty about Sagdeev's future role in the Soviet planetary program, he retained his big front office at IKI, and he topped the short list of candidates for the post of chief scientist for the planned 1994 mission to Mars. Valery Barsukov, like Sagdeev, is a principal advocate of the Soviet unmanned-spaceflight program, and though he was the symposium's nominal co-chairman, he had decided to return to Moscow to see to the fortunes of the program in the coming election. The week before, he had attended a Lunar and Planetary Science Conference in Houston, and he apparently felt that he had been too long away from the vigorous politicking that was going

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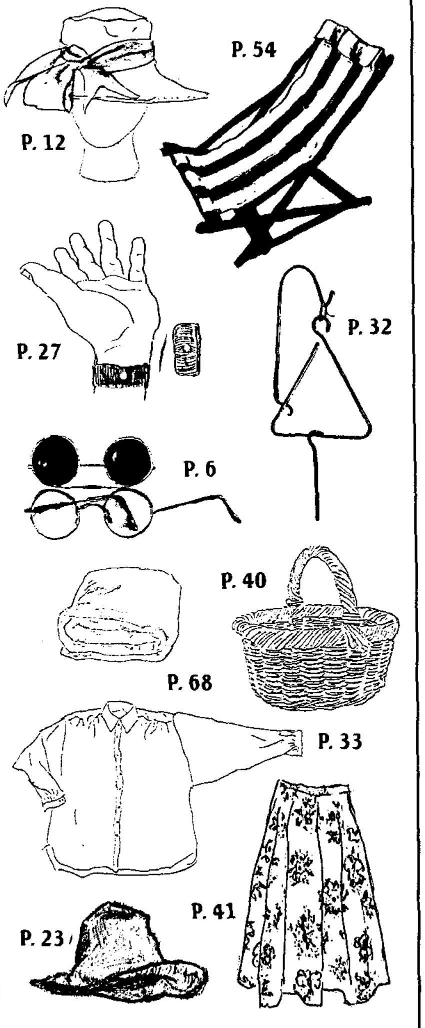

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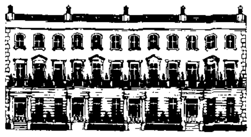

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on in the Academy of Sciences. Alexander Basilevsky, the head of the Vernadsky's planetary-geology section, would stand in for him at Brown.

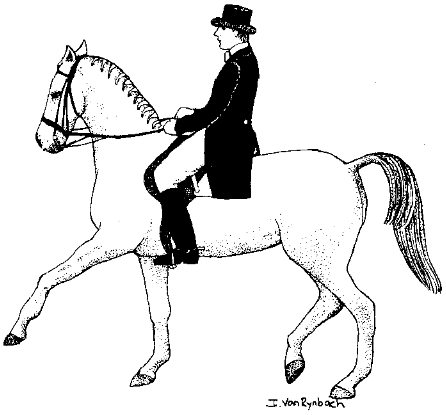
Lev Mukhin, an IKI physicist, had brought along a set of the pictures that Phobos II took on February 28th, and he showed them to me. One was notable for a large crater—probably Stickney—which seemed to rise right out of the picture. Another showed Phobos as it was rounding the limb of Mars. A third, even more spectacular, showed Phobos after it had rounded Mars, suspended in space against the planet's ruddy disk. When this last photograph had been displayed at the Houston Lunar and Planetary Science Conference, he told me, some eight hundred American scientists present had erupted in applause.

After the first day's session—which ended with a dinner at the Graduate Center catered by an Armenian restaurant, in uneasy memory of the August, 1987, microsymposium in Soviet Armenia, at which almost all the foreign participants had come down with amoebic dysentery—I sought out Alexander Basilevsky to ask him about national differences in the practice of science. James Head, the American co-chairman, announced the evening's entertainment—a videotape of "The Russians Are Coming"—and as a knot of Soviet and American scientists congregated around an oversized television set in the lounge Basilevsky and I retreated to an adjacent room. He looked a little worn out; the afternoon's session had been a stormy one, centering on the question of whether or not plate tectonics existed on Venus. Basilevsky didn't think so, but a couple of his colleagues at the Vernadsky disagreed, and so did many American scientists, including Head. Very few Soviet scientists believe that plate tectonics exists on Earth, Basilevsky told me, and therefore almost nobody in his country believes that it exists on any other planet. "In the United States, ninety-nine point nine per cent of the geologists accept plate theory," he said. "In Russia, only the younger ones do, but the number is growing. I myself believe in it for Earth but not for Venus. Barsukov does not believe in it even for Earth."

Basilevsky has long-standing ties with American planetologists, and he is a keen observer of the ways in which science proceeds in the two countries. Perhaps the biggest difference between Soviet and American planetology, he told me, stems from the fact that the United States has a far larger community of planetary scientists, a fact that the Soviets are very aware of. American space scientists generate more ideas, even about Soviet data, than their Soviet counterparts do. The reason, Basilevsky said, was obvious: "You have twenty-five university groups, plus the United States Geological Survey, plus several centers at NASA, all doing planetary geology. In the Soviet Union, only my laboratory works full time on planetary geology, and there are only four people in my lab. There may be a handful of geologists working on planetary science in other Soviet laboratories. You have about fifty times as many planetary geologists as we do. There is more chance that there will be a new idea among several hundred people than among four. So it is very difficult to be competitive with you."

On March 21st—right in the middle of the symposium—Phobos II's orbit was changed again, to one that brought it within fifty miles of the moon's orbit. The imaging sessions resumed, and the final one would take place a few days after the symposium was over. Then the spacecraft would be put into an even closer orbit, and its automatic pilot would be turned on to conduct the final approach and the encounter.

In many respects, the most exciting period of a planetary mission is not the encounter itself but the days just before it, when no one knows what to expect. In the case of our own moon and Mars, the interest had been fuelled by centuries of speculation, and before the first Apollo and Viking landings there had been a passionate difference of opinion among scientists over such questions as whether the moon had a hot or a cold interior, and whether or not there had ever been water on the Martian surface. Phobos, by contrast, had not generated such intense controversies, in part because few scientists had thought about the place long enough to work up the strong feelings that lead to lively discussions. There seemed to be considerable agreement—particularly among the Soviets—about the origins of the little moon. At Brown, however, it was clear that the fragile consensus had come unstuck, and the principal revisionists were the Americans. Possibly because American scientists thrive on challenging accepted opinion—or perhaps simply because there are many more of them—some were questioning the idea that Phobos had come to Mars from the outer reaches of the asteroid belt and, indeed, whether it was a carbonaceous chondrite at all.



One of the doubters was George Wetherill, of the Carnegie Institution, in Washington. Wetherill, a pioneer in the study of the dynamics of orbiting planetesimals, told me that he had grave misgivings about both propositions. "I'm going to wait until we get more evidence," he said. "Lots of people are saying silly things. I'm not sure of the dynamics of the capture by Mars of a body coming from the outer part of the asteroid belt, which is farther from Mars than Mars is from the sun." He explained that if the orbit of an outer-belt asteroid were to be perturbed into an ellipse eccentric enough to bring it close to Mars, its velocity would be far too great for the planet's gravity to catch it. Even the spacecraft, with its rocket to slow it, swung into an ellipse some fifty thousand miles long; the moonlet was far more massive than the spacecraft, and would have been travelling at a far higher velocity.

I asked William Hartmann, an astronomer from the Planetary Science Institute, in Tucson, for his thoughts on the origins of Phobos. Hartmann is a specialist in the origins and characteristics of small bodies in the solar system, and he admitted that Wetherill was right about difficulties in the dynamics of a capture by Mars of an outer-belt asteroid, but said he was nonetheless an unreconstructed outer-belt man. He thought he saw a possible way around the problem. "First, you have to ask *how* Phobos got tossed out of the outer half of the belt," he said. "There is a unique moment in the history of the solar system when that might have happened. Before the planets were completely formed, there was still a great deal of hydrogen present. Jupiter, out beyond the asteroid belt, picked up the lion's share of the hydrogen in its vicinity, and, as a result, its gravity became immense enough to clear out what are known as the Kirkwood Gaps—empty zones in the belt. The objects that were once there had circled the sun in resonance with Jupiter—that is, they had orbited exactly two, or three, or four times as fast as the planet, and so they would receive a gravitational boost at a precise point on each circuit. When Jupiter's gravity increased, they were thrown into highly eccentric orbits. And some of these gaps, the ones in the outer part of the belt, would have been full of carbonaceous chondrites. Now, it is very likely that when Jupiter was reaching its full size and clearing out the Kirkwood Gaps the other planets were finishing their formation, too. Mars and the rest of the terrestrial planets may each have had dense atmospheres, extending far into space. Such an atmosphere may have enabled Mars to trap a great many asteroids, most of which eventually crashed on its surface—certain oblong gouges along Mars' equator may be their graves. Phobos and Deimos might have been trapped at the end of the process, as the primordial Martian atmosphere began dissipating. That would explain why they are still there."

I sought out Wetherill and put Hartmann's proposition to him. Wetherill frowned. "There is no reason to think Mars even *existed* when Phobos was kicked out of the Kirkwood Gaps—if it was," he protested. Many astronomers, he said, now thought that Jupiter had grown faster than the inner planets. Water ice is abundant beyond the asteroid belt, and water condensation would have greatly speeded up the accretion of the outer planets. At the time that Phobos was alleged to have roared by, the orbit now occupied by Mars would, in Wetherill's opinion, have been full of planetesimals of various sizes, and even the largest of them—the nucleus of the future planet—would have had trouble capturing an outer-belt asteroid.

I went back to Hartmann. He told me that I had got him into trouble with Wetherill by giving him the impression that Hartmann had said that the capture of Phobos would be easy—indeed, Hartmann had apparently been given a good tongue-lashing by Wetherill, who was some years his senior. He seemed more amused than cowed by the experience, however, and he had a new argument: There were on Phobos, he said, chains of small craters with high rims; their conformation and the fact that they occurred as chains suggested that they were not impact craters at all but had been created by gas—perhaps water vapor—that had vented forcefully from deep inside Phobos. Hartmann pointed out that comets appear to be carbonaceous chondrites rich in water ice, and that as a comet approaches the sun water sublimates from inside it and bursts, sometimes explosively, through fissures in the crust, in great geysers, which (along with carbonaceous dust) form the long cometary tail. "I suspect that Phobos may have once contained water, and as it neared the sun it vented the water," Hartmann said. "It could have acted like a comet on its way to Mars." He said he hoped that the spacecraft would fly over such a crater chain, so that he could look for signs of venting.

On the symposium's last morning, Lev Mukhin told me, beaming, that he had talked on the telephone to Moscow a couple of hours earlier, and his friends in Moscow had told him that the spacecraft was doing well and that the Phobos encounter would almost certainly take place as scheduled, on April 9th.

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ON March 27th, at 3:59 P.M. Moscow time, Phobos II again turned from its sun-Earth orientation to image Phobos. As usual, the batteries were powering the cameras, the navigation system, and a few other necessary systems; to save electricity, everything else was turned off. At 5:20 P.M., the imaging session was scheduled to start. At about the same time, members of the mission's various scientific teams, who had been meeting at IKI to make final arrangements for the flyby, wound up their discussions. A little over an hour and a half later—between 6:59 and 7:05 P.M.—the imaging session should have been over and the spacecraft should have returned once more to the sun-Earth orientation and resumed transmission of a radio signal to Earth. By 7:20, no signal had been received. At 7:40, the flight controllers began sending emergency instructions. At 8:50, a signal was received, but it lasted only seventeen minutes. The signal came not from the dish antenna on top of the spacecraft—which hadn't been operational since November—but from one of the omnidirectional antennas mounted on the solar panels. A

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flight controller later told a reporter from *Aviation Week & Space Technology* that he thought he was "tracking a spinner"—a satellite that rotates to retain stability.

Two days after the loss of signal, an official at Glavkosmos told a reporter for the New York *Times* that the spacecraft was "ninety-nine per cent lost for good." The official, and anyone else familiar with the craft, knew that, whatever else might have befallen it, Phobos II could not survive on its batteries alone for more than half a dozen hours. Still, the flight controllers continued their attempts to make contact for two weeks. Miracles had happened before: several years ago, an American satellite studying the sun went off the air; after a month, for no apparent reason, its signal was reacquired, and it went on with its mission as though nothing had happened. But Phobos II's signal never came back.

At the time, the Soviet scientists who had been at Brown were on their way back to Moscow. One of the first scientists to be aware of the seriousness of the situation was Alexander Basilevsky. He had telephoned Valery Barsukov for news while the engineers were still trying to restore communications. It fell to him to pass the word to several of his colleagues. "They said some very bad words that do not translate nicely into English," he told me when I asked about their reactions. Mikhail Marov, of the Institute of Applied Mathematics, which had done many of the trajectory calculations for the approach to Phobos, had also just returned from Brown. He was discussing the status of the spacecraft with a colleague when he got the news. "I was very much frustrated," he told me later. "At Brown, we had been in regular touch with IKI by telephone, and everything had seemed all right. Quite frankly, I was afraid of a bad outcome—but not so soon. You know, it was an absolutely new spacecraft, and there had not been enough time to test it on the ground. The period I was most worried about was the flyby itself, because that would have been the time of greatest stress on all the systems—many instruments would have been operating. And, privately, I was not certain that all systems would work properly."

Most of the American Phobos scientists were not yet in Moscow, since the planned encounter was thirteen days off. Bradford Smith was closest to the scene; he was in Budapest with the European members of the imaging team. "I came in to work on the morning of March 28th," he told me. "The people there had been talking to IKI, and when they said that the spacecraft was lost and could not be recovered I felt physically sick. It's a tragedy! I can just imagine what the morale was at IKI—it was bad enough in Budapest."

Most of the scientists had lost about three and a half years' work; worse, they had lost highly desirable data that would have kept them busy for many years to come. "It was as though you had been about to marry a beautiful girl, and after the first kiss she was killed" was how Basilevsky put it. For Susan McKenna Lawlor, it was "like losing a baby." But Vasily Moroz, an atmospheric physicist at IKI, may have described the general mood most succinctly when he told me that there had been a feeling of "emptiness." As with all losses of this nature, there was also considerable anger—which shortly found its target in the engineers.

I FLEW to Moscow the following May 14th, to attend a conference at IKI on the results that Phobos II had obtained in its Martian orbit and in the vicinity of Phobos. It was hoped, but was by no means certain, that the conference would also hear from the Babakin engineers themselves about what had gone wrong and how they planned to set things right for the future. I had stopped off in London for several days, as had a number of the American Phobos scientists. American planetologists make a point of stopping in London or Paris on their way to Soviet conferences, in an effort to mitigate the effects of jet lag; their visas are for short periods, and they want to be in decent shape while they are in Moscow. The stopover also provides a chance to have a few good meals and a touch of luxury before being consigned to the austerities of the Hotel Academiciaskaya. Consequently, on the morning of my departure for the conference, several contented-looking American scientists were lined up at Heathrow Airport for British Airways' nine-thirty flight to Moscow.

I was greeted by Bruce Murray, a professor of planetary science at Caltech and a former director of J.P.L. He is also one of two co-founders—the other being the Cornell astronomer

Carl Sagan—of the Planetary Society. Since 1965, when he was on the imaging team of Mariner 4, the first spacecraft to photograph Mars, Murray has been on the imaging teams of a great many missions to Mercury, Venus, and Mars. During his directorship of J.P.L.—a post he held from 1976 to 1982—the two Viking landers reached Mars, the two Voyager spacecraft were launched to the outer planets, and planning was begun for the Magellan mission to Venus and the Galileo mission to Jupiter, which was launched last October. Murray's years as director also coincided with a period when—because of budget cuts, and production delays and cost overruns in the space-shuttle program (not J.P.L.'s bailiwick)—the United States' planetary program began grinding to a halt. He has recently published an excellent account of his experiences in a book entitled "Journey Into Space" (Norton, 1989). The story has its Churchillian overtones. Murray, too, was something of a lone voice—in his case, in the wilderness of NASA's administration. In his tenure as director of J.P.L., events forced him to preside over the demise of something he held to be of inestimable value. To the extent that this country's planetary exploration has resumed, it is due in good measure to battles that Murray fought a decade ago. Along with the Planetary Society, he is still fighting these battles. He has a laconic manner, but he speaks with a great deal of force and conviction, especially when he is arguing on behalf of exploration of the solar system. I arranged to sit next to him on the flight to Moscow, and as we were finishing a continental breakfast and heading out over the Baltic I asked him what he thought of the loss of the two Phobos craft.

"Well, both spacecraft were lost when they turned from their orientation toward the sun and the Earth," he said, "and both apparently were unable to recognize this and correct it. And in both cases the batteries were not getting charged properly. The onboard computer system didn't have enough sense to protect the batteries from just plain draining dry, which is what they did, and therefore both craft died. Those are systems-level problems—problems having to do not with the breakdown of a single system in the spacecraft but with the basic design of the spacecraft, and how the systems

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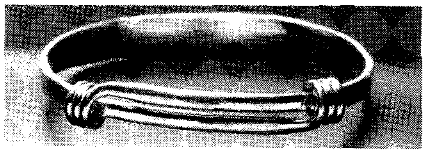

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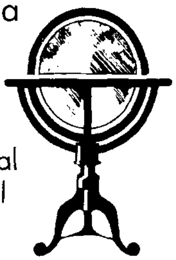

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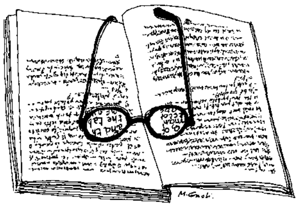
work together. The Soviet engineers should be looking at the two failures and trying to see what they had in common, but there is no indication that they are. In Glavkosmos's press release on the loss of Phobos II, there is no mention of Phobos I."

I pointed out that there had been a difference: the Phobos I failure had happened because of a ground error, and Phobos II had failed presumably because of an error generated in the spacecraft.



"It doesn't make any difference how it happened," Murray said. "Either way, in a sophisticated spacecraft the error should have been caught and queried. But that didn't happen, and the two spacecraft acted on the errors—and they shouldn't have, without verification from the ground. That lapse is a systems-level problem, too. The Soviet tracking of unmanned spacecraft is intermittent—our own spacecraft transmit tracking signals constantly—and the ground controllers weren't even listening when Phobos I was lost. They didn't know about the loss for three days! But the point is that in each case the circumstance leading to the loss is less important than the fact that neither of the spacecraft could respond to the situation. Nor could the engineers, on the ground. Remember, the Babakin engineers worked for years with the flight controllers at Kaliningrad on the Vega mission to Venus and Halley's Comet—they had worked with the controllers for more than a decade on the entire Venera series—and as a result the software was well understood. A team of sorts evolved which knew how to give commands to Vega. But that team did not develop or operate Phobos. This is an important point: the Phobos mission failed not just because of a systems breakdown but also because of failures in the managerial system. Not only do you have a new spacecraft but you have a new spacecraft that seems to have been designed by engineers off in a back room somewhere, instead of by people with a direct link to the previous industrial partnership—though, normally, the Soviets are quite evolutionary in their design. And the spacecraft was originally designed for an objective for which it would not be used. Furthermore, it was designed under Brezhnev, and you fly it under Gorbachev. And, further still, there are twelve other countries and lots of valuable new instruments involved. So you've got all the elements for a catastrophe."

I asked Murray what effect he thought the Phobos failures would have on international coöperation with the Soviet Mars program, particularly as far as the United States was concerned.

"For any foreign country, including the United States, to consider long-term endeavors with the Soviet Union, it has to have confidence that the Soviet engineers are identifying the problems that caused the Phobos failures and are moving to correct them," he said, as the Baltic slid by beneath us. "Even among the Soviet scientists, there is very little awareness of what the Soviet engineers are doing—and, of course, the Soviet engineers are even less accessible to us. With respect to future endeavors, I think that how the engineers respond to the Phobos failures—or how they *don't* respond to them—will be important. In public, they are still not acknowledging a systems problem, or a management problem. Instead, they are suggesting that the failure was probably caused by a meteor hitting the spacecraft—which is absurd! It's just like the way they responded after the Phobos I failure—they blamed the flight controller who had dispatched the wrong command, and not a technical malfunction, let alone any systems or management failure. Management should have split the control of the scientific instruments and the spacecraft systems between two separate onboard computers, instead of combining the two functions in one computer system. I don't think there will be much of a future international Mars program unless Soviet industry changes itself—and unless *glasnost* and *perestroika* spread to the Babakin Center. If you are going to be technically interdependent, you have to have confidence that the other guy knows what he's doing."

EITHER as a concession to its foreign guests or because of a conversion to their ways, IKI had, for this conference, set up a coffee shop in a small room in the basement. A samovar was kept bubbling, and the room was usually overflowing with scientists. The Soviet scientists I talked to there had largely recovered their spirits. Even though they were still discussing what had gone wrong with the Phobos mission, it was with an eye to the future, not the past; obviously, no one wanted a repetition of the Phobos failures. Many of them felt that the mission's preparation period would have been too short even for a model that had already flown, and had been inexcusable for a new model. Mikhail Marov could not get over the transmission of the command which had led to the loss of Phobos I. "Of course, the intrinsic logic of the computer should have rejected the command," he said. "But before it came to that, the command should have been tested on Earth, in a spacecraft simulator, before it was sent. In Russia, we have a proverb: 'Seven times it should be measured before I cut it.' Do you have that proverb?"

I said that I hadn't heard it but I could imagine what it meant.

While the Soviet scientists tended to concentrate on human problems—the carelessness of flight controllers, for example—the Americans looked for solutions to "systems-level" problems, which on the human level are more commonly known as management problems. The social sciences, which encourage this kind of thinking, are relatively unknown in the Soviet Union; whereas management is a field of study in its own right in the United States these days, the Soviets have not until very recently regarded it as one. (To rectify the management gap, the city government of Moscow is planning to send a delegation of bureaucrats to study urban-management principles in New York City, in what may be one of *perestroika's* less inspired moves.) Bradford Smith, who had had seventeen years of experience with the Voyager engineers, put the blame for the failure of Phobos I on too much bureaucracy, and not on the flight controller who made the error. He had learned from his Soviet colleagues that the man programming the ground-based computer in Yevpatoriya did not know that someone else was working on a similar program in Kaliningrad. "There should have been someone over the two of them insuring compatibility," Smith said. "And someone should have verified both commands before they were sent—those are management problems." The reason the onboard computer system had read the Kaliningrad message as a command to turn off the thrusters, I found out later, had its origin in another faulty management decision, compounded by the short time that the Soviet space bureaucracy considers acceptable for the preparation of a mission. The onboard computer system contained certain programs used in preflight tests—programs that are normally removed before launch. However, because of the haste in getting the spacecraft off the pad, there wasn't time to do this—the job would have required the removal of the computer system from the spacecraft—and the Babakin engineers therefore decided to lock the programs away in the spacecraft's memory. The message without the letter B turned out to be the key that unlocked the preflight programs.

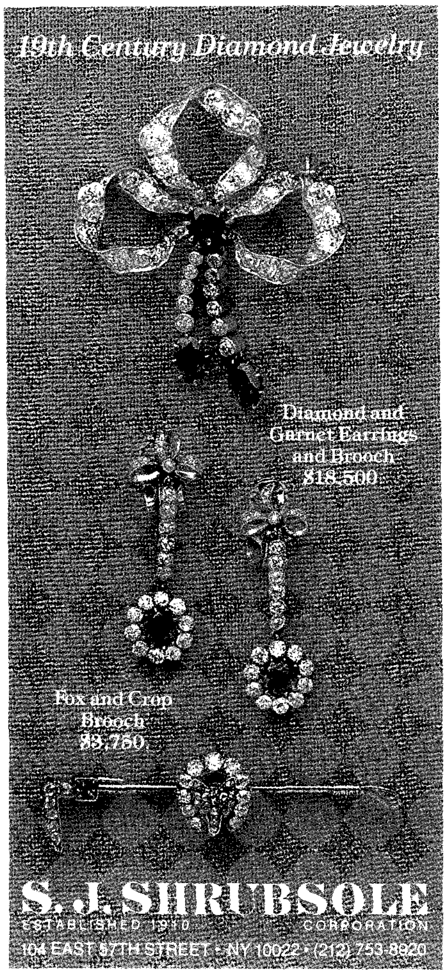
There was some talk about the Babakin Center's issuing a report on both accidents, but Murray told me that more was needed than a look at a report generated by the Babakin Center; he wanted an independent international review board—one that would have available to it not only the Babakin's findings but also the evidence on which the findings were based, so that it could do its own analysis.

Most of the conference was devoted to the results that Phobos II had managed to acquire before it was lost. There was a considerable amount of data from instruments that had made observations of Mars as well as Phobos during the approach: these were the cameras; the KRFM and a companion spectrometer called the ISM; a French instrument named Auguste, which measured the vertical profile of water vapor, ozone, and dust in the atmosphere of Mars; the transponder, which relayed quite a lot of orbital information to J.P.L.; and the magnetometers, which measured the faint magnetic field around Mars. If the spacecraft had come a hundred and eighty miles closer to Mars, the magnetometers might have determined whether the slight field they were measuring was intrinsic to the planet or related to the sun, but that opportunity was lost when the flight controllers decided to drop the third midcourse correction—a decision they made without consulting the scientists.

The instruments that got the most data were the cameras and the KRFM/ISM. Leonid Ksanfomaliti, the leader of the KRFM team, told me that his instrument had managed to get good spectral data for Phobos. The expectation was that Phobos would have very few spectral features, but the KRFM data, and the camera images, showed considerable variety in its composition over different parts of its surface—enough to indicate that there was a good deal of difference between Phobos and the carbonaceous chondrites. According to the ISM, Phobos had less water in its rocks than most carbonaceous chondrites have. Some parts of Phobos seemed more chondritic than others, however. "I'm not saying Phobos isn't a carbonaceous chondrite," Ksanfomaliti told me. "It's just that it's not like any known on Earth. It could be that carbonaceous chondrites are just one constituent of Phobos." But, taken together with the problems raised by the dynamics of capture, these findings increased doubt—especially on the part of many American scientists—about whether Phobos was from the outer belt at all, and the question is still unresolved. The best match for the spectral data is with chondrites other than carbonaceous ones, and the current thinking is that Phobos may well have originated much nearer Mars than was formerly believed. Its surface material could have been darkened by solar radiation; this process would have been abetted when the particles that eventually made it up were orbiting Mars, just as sunlight will dry hay more rapidly when the hay is tossed in the air.

The KRFM/ISM would have got more data than it did if it hadn't been for a couple of problems. On February 28th, when the spacecraft moved off its normal axis for the first imaging session, a command had been sent to the paired instruments to begin their operations, but no data came back, because the command had been erroneous: it had ordered the two instruments to do their own in-flight calibrations, so instead of observing Phobos they were examining their own interiors. The correct command was sent up the next day, but it never got through, because the engineers had preëmpted the channel for their diagnostic tests and had neglected to inform the scientists.

On Monday afternoon, the first day



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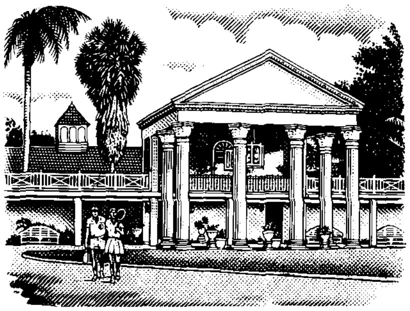

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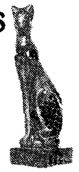

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of the conference, I attended a meeting of the imaging team. Boris Zhukov, the team's leader, displayed on a computer terminal, one at a time, the thirty-seven pictures that had been received. Zhukov's group had done only preliminary work on the images, and he apologized for this, explaining that the team had been spending its time, at the request of the Babakin Center, looking for meteors in the pictures. The engineers were still playing down the computer difficulties and were pressing the idea that Phobos II had been put out of action by a meteoric impact; they had noticed some little blips on the pictures which they thought looked suspicious. "No one here believes that a meteor large enough to cause damage hit the spacecraft, but we were nevertheless made to analyze all the images for bright spots," Zhukov said. "There are some bright spots. Some are impulse noise—static. Some are defects in the imaging system. But none are meteors. We know our imaging system rather well, and we can say emphatically that there is no meteor. But the engineers are not satisfied. Now they have sent our imagery to another institute, the Department of Celestial Mechanics of the University of Leningrad, which originally suggested the idea of meteoric impact to the engineers, and that institute says it has found meteors on our images. But what it has found has nothing to do with meteors." One of the suspicious bright spots, he said, turned out to be a high crater rim hit by sunlight on a shadowed part of the moon.

It is, of course, very difficult to prove a negative, and at a subsequent meeting to discuss the evidence for or against the proposition that Phobos II had been done in by a meteor the scientists had to marshal evidence from a variety of sources. Tom Duxbury, of J.P.L., who had been a member of the Viking imaging team, gave statistics about Mariner 9 and Viking: Mariner 9, he said, had orbited Mars for almost an entire year, and the two Viking orbiters had flown within two hundred miles of Phobos fifteen times. "So we penetrated Phobos' orbit very often and never found any material there to make us change our mission design," he said. But a Soviet scientist pointed out that the Babakin engineers were saying it would take the impact of a particle with a mass of only ten grams (about a third of an ounce on Earth) to damage the spacecraft—a particle too small to show up on either the Viking or the Phobos II images. Boris Ivanov, a Soviet crater expert, responded to this by discussing the torus of particles enveloping Phobos' orbit. He had estimated the number of particles of different sizes in the torus at any given time, and had concluded that there would be one impact of a particle of at least ten grams' mass on a body the size of the spacecraft every thousand years; consequently, the chance of Phobos II's having been hit by a particle large enough to put it out of action during its first five weeks in the moon's vicinity was only one in ten thousand.

THE campaign at the Academy of Sciences on behalf of Roald Sagdeev had been successful; he had obtained a place on the ballot, and in a special election in April had been elected to the Congress of People's Deputies. Apparently, he had turned toward politics, and he had not been around IKI much. Late Tuesday afternoon, he returned from another of his trips to Washington, where he had told the House Armed Services Committee that the Strategic Defense Initiative no longer worried his government as much as it had in the past. He went directly to a meeting with representatives of Glavkosmos. As a result of the meeting, Alexander Dunayev, who had apparently forgiven Sagdeev for publicly insulting him, agreed to come to IKI the following Thursday with some of the Babakin engineers to discuss the Phobos failures with the scientists.

At two o'clock that Thursday, the big conference room on the second floor of IKI was filled with more scientists than I had ever seen there before. Many wore earphones; the engineers would be unburdening themselves in Russian, and two women in a booth in the back of the room would provide a simultaneous translation into English and French. Every seat was taken, and the standees were about five deep. Konstantin Tsiolkovsky gazed solemnly from his bas relief, fixing his steely gaze on a table in the front of the room, where Sagdeev sat with his visitors. On his right were two Glavkosmos officials—Dunayev and Roald Kremnev, the director of the Babakin—and on his left were the two engineers in charge of Phobos' radio and guidance systems, and Vyataslav Kovtunenko, the head of the Lavochkin Space Center (a larger

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Glavkosmos entity, of which the Babakin Center is a subsidiary) and the chief designer of the Phobos craft. If Sagdeev seemed out of place in the middle of this group, the five guests looked distinctly uncomfortable in the presence of more than a hundred Phobos scientists. Sagdeev asked Kremnev to speak first. A man in his late forties, he was by far the youngest of the group, most of whom appeared to be in their sixties or seventies.

"Please do not talk about the history of the spacecraft or its purposes," Sagdeev said. "Just tell us what is interesting to us."

Kremnev rose to his feet. "Let me say a few words on the history of the spacecraft and its purposes," he began, and went on to do so, in some detail, for the next five minutes. Finally, he took up some of the problems that had occurred during the mission—problems with the radio, problems with wrong commands generated on Earth and in the spacecraft, problems caused by computer restarts. He discussed what the Babakin Center was doing to analyze these problems. He had set up twelve groups of engineers, he said, to report on such matters as trajectory, onboard systems, and ground control. The group that he spent the most time talking about, though, was the one investigating what he called "external conditions," by which he meant not only meteors but also solar flares. The external-conditions group, which had been instructed about meteors by the University of Leningrad, had learned about solar flares from another institute, which had told the Babakin that for the last several months the sun had been extremely active and that a large number of flares could affect spacecraft electronics. Some of the world's greatest experts on both these subjects were in the room, but the Babakin had not asked IKI for this information. I was told later that neither the University of Leningrad nor the second institute was under the Academy of Sciences—a fact that clearly made a difference to Glavkosmos.

Although no satellites in Earth orbit were adversely affected during this period, Kremnev thought it entirely possible that Phobos II was lost either because of a period of intense solar activity that disrupted its computer system or because of the impact of a meteor. With respect to the spacecraft systems, he said, everything had

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worked reasonably well, but there was some room for improvement. He conceded the need for more power on board, and the need to have a separate computer for the scientific instruments. He did not see a need for any other extensive changes.

The engineer in charge of the guidance system reported that a few days before Phobos II was lost there had been a problem with one of the star trackers for navigation: it had lost the star it was supposed to be holding in view, and at that time the background light was very high. "We feel that the spacecraft was then within a field of particles," he said. "Either there was a mistake in the telemetry or there were particles. We should not exclude the idea that there were particles. We should take seriously the words from the Leningrad group." Later, I learned from some of the Americans present that the loss of signal from the star tracker was itself the only hard evidence for a field of particles; the existence of "high background light" was open to dispute. It was this sort of situation that made Murray and others so eager to see the raw data.

Next, Vyataslav Kovtunenko, the chief designer, spoke. He talked of the importance of decoding the final signals from Phobos II—the last seventeen-minute burst of telemetry. The signal was erratic and hard to decipher, he said. Engineers were trying to read the information using interactive computers; if they were successful, they might have a better idea of what had happened.

When Kovtunenko was through, the questions began. One scientist referred again to the fact that the spacecraft had only one computer system to handle all its operations as well as the scientific instruments: might not the failure have arisen because there hadn't been more computers, and not because of clouds of particles?

Kovtunenko replied that the computer had a threefold redundancy, which diminished the likelihood of errors. "Besides, the computer didn't make errors—we think it just stopped," he said, drawing laughter from his audience.

"What do you think the chances are of the failures' being internal as opposed to external—meteors or flares?" Tom Duxbury asked.

Kovtunenko tried to avoid replying by looking at Sagdeev, as if the question had been addressed to him.

Sagdeev stared back. "You are the general designer," he said. "You should know better than I."

"There is a meteorite cloud, a torus, concentrated in the vicinity of Phobos," Kovtunenko said. "When we talk to the people at IKI about it, one day they give us one estimate of the odds of damage, the next day another. We had no access to French experts, or American experts. Now these other Soviet institutes are helping us. There are spots on the images. The University of Leningrad is studying these things. And we try to correlate the external events—meteors, solar flares—with the events that occurred with the spacecraft." As the source for the Babakin's information on current solar-flare activities he cited an article in a French newspaper. An American scientist sitting near me whispered to me that if a NASA manager cited a newspaper clipping as support for his arguments he would be fired.

Sagdeev cut in. "The possibility of particles massive enough to cause damage to the spacecraft—say, ten grams or more—has been calculated at one in ten thousand," he said.

"The probabilities are very low, but still the possibility is there," Kovtunenko said. The scientists laughed again.

Sagdeev said that the point was that spacecraft should be designed so that even if there were particle clouds or solar flares the craft would have a good chance of survival. "I would like to tell you about an episode on Vega as it approached Halley's Comet," he went on. "Half an hour before the encounter, the computer program that operated the steerable instrument platform failed. Here at IKI, we began worrying that we were going to lose the closeup

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bed, fitted naked closely
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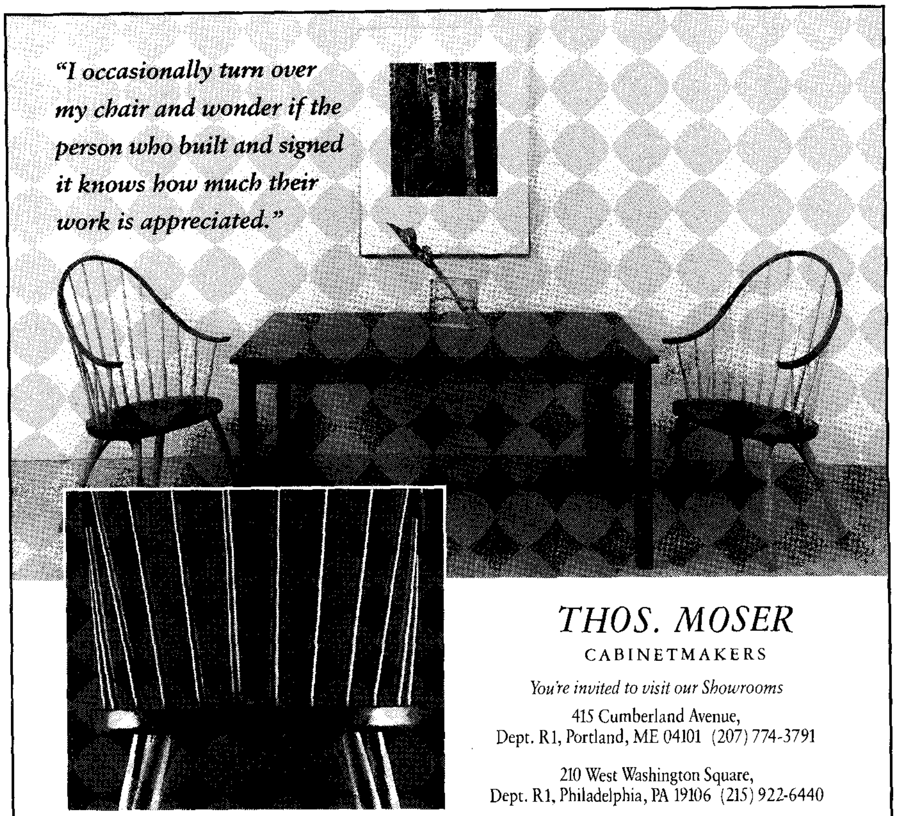
after love, drifting back and
forth across the border of consciousness, our
bodies buoyant, clasped. Your hand
tightens on the table. You're a little afraid
I'll chicken out. What you do not want
is to lie in a hospital bed for a year
after a stroke, without being able to
think or die, you do not want
to be tied to a chair like my prim grandmother,
cursing. The room is dim around us,
ivory globes, pink curtains
bound at the waist, and outside
a weightless bright lifted-up
summer twilight. I tell you you don't
know me if you think I will not
kill you. Think how we have floated together
eye to eye, nipple to nipple,
sex to sex, the halves of a single creature
drifting up to the lip of matter
and over it—you know me from the bright, blood-
flecked delivery room, if a beast
had you in its jaws I would attack it, if the ropes
binding your soul are your own wrists I will cut them.

—SHARON OLDS

• •

imagery of the comet's nucleus. So we switched to a redundant system for steering the platform, and it was a success. So we ask in the future that the automated systems in the spacecraft have more redundancy. But now we are near a decisive step. Not only Soviet taxpayers are involved in the Phobos missions but taxpayers of twelve other countries. Future international coöperation depends on how well we analyze our mistakes and correct them. We should set up an international review group, to go over all the spacecraft data. The engineers who built the spacecraft and are now looking at the data should not be alone in the review. And the review should not be of a few independent systems but of the whole craft. People are asking if too much money is being spent on space, and the loss of the two Phobos craft increases their concern. They, too, must be satisfied."

Bruce Murray had his hand up, and Sagdeev called on him. Murray rose to his feet—he has a rather commanding presence—and said that he wished to express an American point of view. "I am here as an American space explorer," he said. "I am very interested in international coöperation going further. In order for this to happen, the American Administration must have confidence not only in Soviet technology but also in Soviet openness. . . . It is going to be a hard sell. And the only way to overcome that is to show that there has been a thorough and objective analysis of the Phobos failures, and that the proper steps are being taken to remedy them. In that connection, there are two things you should be aware of from the U.S. point of view. First of all, the United States has considerable data about the Phobos environment from Viking. Viking penetrated that environment many times and found nothing. So it's odd that something hit Phobos II there—particularly just when it turned from its orientation and was vulnerable to internal failure. This suggestion is implausible to us, and we are discouraged at hearing a long discussion about it. The second point is that, because the Phobos I failure, too, was associated with going off the Earth-sun orientation, there is a systems problem regarding the ability of the spacecraft to operate autonomously. That is what should be the focus of the investigation. And I hear nothing about that. I hear about meteors bang-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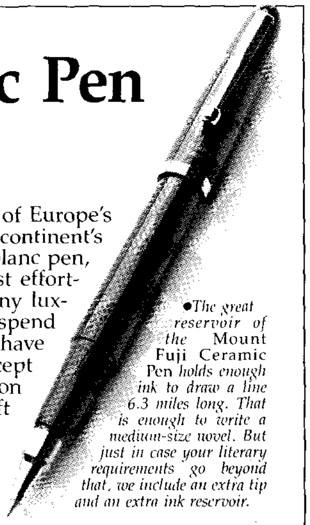

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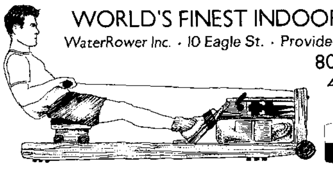

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ing into the craft, but I hear nothing about the automatic control system—if it even exists. That is the question. Is there a system built into the spacecraft for automatic return to the Earth-sun orientation, and, if so, why did it fail on two occasions? And if it isn't there, is it going to be put in before Americans are going to be expected to invest substantial sums? Because there is no way to have high-yield, ambitious missions around Mars—missions that will require all kinds of operations—unless the spacecraft has a high degree of autonomy. And I say all this as your friend and as a person who is trying hard to persuade Americans to participate in more ambitious missions—it could all end right here! Unless the Phobos failures are viewed as the result of a serious technical problem, and not the result of some mysterious outside influences—and unless both failures are analyzed openly, and unless the problems are identified and solved openly—I don't think the United States could be persuaded to enter into a significant agreement beyond Mars '94. And I would be very, very sorry for that."

There was remarkably little reaction to Murray's speech at the head table—at least, from the engineering group. Sagdeev, however, thanked Murray and recognized a French scientist, who echoed Murray's remarks. The meeting ended with Sagdeev's asking his successor, Alec Galeev, to work out with Kremnev plans for international participation in the review board.

A press conference followed, in another room, at which Kremnev performed something of an about-face, presumably because of the united front presented by the scientists. He made no mention of meteors or solar flares, and he offered what amounted to an apology for Soviet technology: After mentioning the difficulties that had arisen with the Soviet-made Phobos computers, he concluded, "The question, to tell you the truth as an engineer, was not the surrounding environment in space, because we believe that the main issue, for us, is to make the spacecraft systems reliable. Sometimes we may see a shooting star in the sky, but that doesn't necessarily mean that it will hit us on the head, or that it will hit the spacecraft, either. You have to remember something. The chances are that the foreign correspondents here are using not a Soviet camera but a Nikon. Nobody compares a Volga with a Cadillac or a Rolls-Royce. Sometimes, in the Soviet Union, we have to make reliable things with things that are a little bit primitive."

VOYAGER II, meanwhile, was drawing closer to Neptune, and in August I went out to Pasadena for the encounter and also to attend a conference, at Caltech, of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, which drew a number of Soviet scientists and engineers, Roald Kremnev among them. The international review board had turned out to be a chimera, and as yet no Westerners had been granted access to the data about the two Phobos failures. I talked to Kremnev in a Caltech classroom, and when I asked him, through an interpreter, about the board he shrugged and replied that he was not the author of that proposal, adding, however, that further analysis of the final seventeen-minute burst of telemetry from Phobos II indicated that its computer system had indeed ceased operating, for reasons unknown. Though the Soviet engineers were not as open as Western scientists would have liked, they had become more candid than ever before—partly as a result of pressure exerted by Sagdeev following the loss of Phobos II—and Kremnev was quite voluble on the subject of the Mars '94 mission. The Mars '94 spacecraft, he said, had been modified as a result of the Phobos failures. It would have the ability to reorient itself automatically toward Earth and the sun, it would have more powerful and longer-lasting batteries, and there would be a separate computer for the scientific instruments. Later, I learned that there would also be a reëxamination of the basic computer design—to avoid the restart problems, among other things.

Whether these reforms by themselves, without oversight by an international review board, had satisfied American anxiety about coöperation with the Soviets was unclear. In July, President Bush had made a major speech about American space policy, in which he announced plans for a manned base on the moon and the unmanned and subsequent manned exploration of Mars; he talked of the need for international coöperation in space, but he made no specific reference to collaborating with the Soviet Union.

Valery Barsukov, of the Vernadsky, was also at the A.I.A.A. conference—he is increasingly taking over Sagdeev's role as the spokesman for the Soviet planetary program—and I talked to him about the bearing that the President's July speech would have on the future of joint Soviet-American space missions. He did not sound at all discouraged, pointing out that the Bush proposals by no means shut the door. On the contrary, he argued, by proposing a program similar to the Soviet program Bush had enhanced the possibility of future coöperation. Indeed, Barsukov said, he had just come from a meeting with NASA officials in Washington, where various ways of collaborating had been discussed, one idea being that, in exchange for the Mars Observer's carrying the transmitter for the Mars '94 balloons, the Mars '94 spacecraft would carry a joint French-American-Soviet spectrometer containing advanced American electronics. Moreover, he said, ten American scientists were already working with Soviet teams on future planetary missions, including Mars '94, and ten Soviet scientists would also be approved for American missions. Three of them had already joined Voyager teams for the Neptune encounter, and later that week, when I drove out from Pasadena to J.P.L. to visit the Voyager imaging team, I found Alexander Basilevsky, one of the three, hard at work analyzing the images coming back from Neptune.

Barsukov's optimism was justified last March, when President Bush announced that the United States was opening discussions about coöperation on missions to the Moon and Mars with all nations, including the Soviet Union. This was the first time since the mid-nineteen-seventies, when an Apollo and a Soyuz spacecraft docked in Earth orbit, that our Administration has officially countenanced joint maneuvers with the Soviets in space. Though compared with the persistent Soviet desire for such coöperation our own expression may seem a bit offhand, Bruce Murray, for one, sees it as a major change—particularly in the light of two subsequent statements by the President. In a speech in Texas on May 11th, Bush set a deadline of 2019 for manned landings on Mars, and around the same time the White House requested a twenty-four per cent increase in NASA's budget for 1991—a

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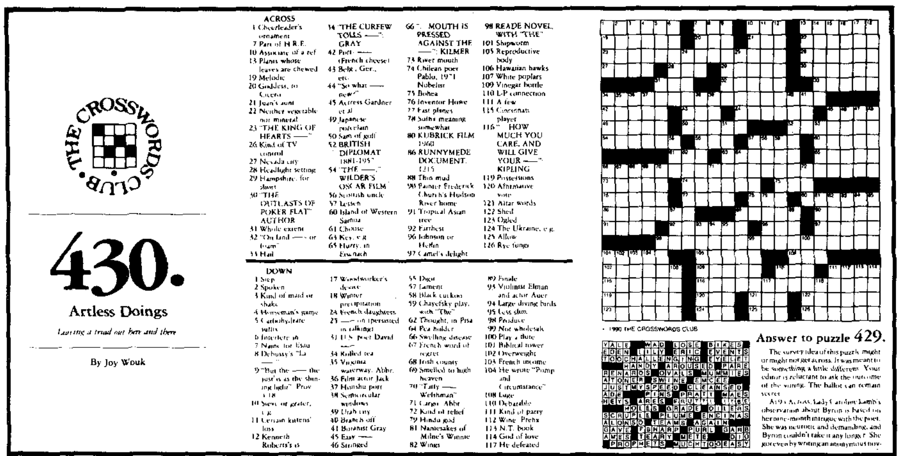
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ACROSS
1 Cheerleader's ornament
7 Part of H.R.E.
10 Associate of a ref
13 Plants whose leaves are chewed
19 Melodic
20 Goddess, to Cicero
21 Juan's aunt
22 Neither vegetable nor mineral
23 "THE KING OF HEARTS —"
26 Kind of TV control
27 Nevada city
28 Headlight setting
29 Hampshire, for short
30 "THE OUTCASTS OF POKER FLAT" AUTHOR
31 Whole extent
32 "On land — or foam"
33 Hail
34 "THE CURFEW TOLLS —": GRAY
42 Port- — (French cheese)
43 Belg., Ger., etc.
44 "So what — new?"
45 Actress Gardner et al.
49 Japanese porcelain
50 Sam of golf
52 BRITISH DIPLOMAT 1881-1957
54 "THE —," WILDER'S OSCAR FILM
56 Scottish uncle
57 Lessen
60 Island of Western Samoa
61 Choose
63 Key, e.g.
65 Hurry, in Eisenach
66 "... MOUTH IS PRESSED AGAINST THE —": KILMER
73 River mouth
74 Chilean poet Pablo, 1971 Nobelist
75 Bohea
76 Inventor Howe
77 Fast planes
78 Suffix meaning somewhat
80 KUBRICK FILM 1960
86 RUNNYMEDE DOCUMENT, 1215
88 Thin mud
90 Painter Frederick Church's Hudson River home
91 Tropical Asian tree
92 Farthest
96 Johnson or Heflin
97 Camel's delight
98 READE NOVEL, WITH "THE"
101 Shipworm
105 Reproductive body
106 Hawaiian hawks
107 White poplars
109 Vinegar bottle
110 L-P connection
111 A few
115 Cincinnati player
116 "... HOW MUCH YOU CARE, AND WILL GIVE YOUR —": KIPLING
119 Possessions
120 Affirmative vote
121 Altar words
122 Shed
123 Ogled
124 The Ukraine, e.g.
125 Allow
126 Rye fungi

DOWN
1 Step
2 Spoken
3 Kind of maid or shake
4 Horseman's game
5 Carbohydrate suffix
6 Interfere in
7 Name for Esau
8 Debussy's "La —"
9 "But the — the just is as the shining light": Prov. 4:18
10 Sieve or grater, e.g.
11 Certain kittens' loss
12 Kenneth Roberts's ...
17 Woodworker's device
18 Winter precipitation
24 French daughters
25 — on (persisted in talking)
31 U.S. poet David —
34 Rolled tea
35 Virginia waterway: Abbr.
36 Film actor Jack
37 Honshu port
38 Semicircular windows
39 Utah city
40 Branch off
41 Botanist Gray
45 Easy —
46 Stringed ...
55 Digit
57 Lament
58 Black cuckoos
59 Chayefsky play, with "The"
62 Thought, in Pisa
64 Pea holder
66 Swelling disease
67 French word of regret
68 Irish county
69 Smelled to high heaven
70 "Taffy — Welshman"
71 Cargo: Abbr.
72 Kind of relief
79 Hindu god
81 Namesakes of Milne's Winnie
82 Wings
89 Finale
93 Violinist Elman and actor Auer
94 Large diving birds
95 Less slim
98 Produce
99 Not wholesale
100 Play a flute
101 Biblical tower
102 Overweight
103 French income
104 He wrote "Pomp and Circumstance"
108 Luge
110 Debatable
111 Kind of parry
112 Wine: Prefix
113 N.T. book
114 God of love
117 He defeated

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Answer to puzzle 429.

The survey idea of this puzzle might or might not get across. It was meant to be something a little different. Your editor is reluctant to ask the outcome of the voting. The ballot can remain secret.

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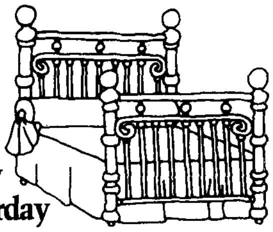

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greater increase than has been requested for any other federal agency. All in all, Murray feels, the President has indicated seriousness about the proposals he made last July, which some planetary scientists had begun to wonder about, and he has held out his hand to the Soviet space establishment, which he had not done before.

Murray is less sanguine about NASA's response to joint endeavors. For one thing, the space agency has always been reluctant to make any plans that are dependent on Soviet technology—a reluctance that predates the Phobos failures, though, of course, they haven't helped. For another, its top management has been imbued with what has been until very recently the attitude of the Administration—that the Soviets are erstwhile enemies, who should not be helped. And although lower management, in the past, has been quite receptive to coöperation with the Russians, it is not now as sympathetic as it used to be, for reasons stemming, ironically, from the President's plans for missions to the Moon and Mars. After Bush's initial proposal, the National Space Council, which oversees our space policy, announced that it would invite suggestions from several sources—including industry, various laboratories, and universities—on ways to carry out the new plans. NASA's position as the nation's leading agency for space exploration has thus been threatened, and much of NASA's management does not see the issue of Soviet-American coöperation as helping it. "Going to Mars is not high on NASA's priority list, and dealing with the Russians is something NASA's management has little affinity or experience with," Murray said. "NASA management hasn't got used to the idea that the President is serious about his plans for space exploration and coöperation. It will probably take a summit agreement between Bush and Gorbachev to get their attention."

Murray was concerned, too, about the declining influence of Roald Sagdeev. Sagdeev had been a scheduled panelist and speaker at the A.I.A.A. conference, but he had decided at the last minute not to go to Pasadena; instead, he had gone to an environmental conference in Utah. One successful outcome of Sagdeev's new political influence was that Soviet scientists would have some financial leverage over future missions, but he had distanced himself from the Soviet space program and had suffered a number of disappointments as well: he had hoped to be appointed a vice-president of the Academy of Sciences, but the appointment had been blocked; and he had not been elected to the Supreme Soviet, the inner, permanent group of the Congress of People's Deputies. He is reported to have turned down the position of chief scientist for the Mars '94 mission—a position that most of his friends feel would have been his for the asking—and the post will very likely go to Valery Barsukov. Sagdeev is making other changes in his life. Over the past year, he has been writing his memoirs, in collaboration with Susan Eisenhower, the granddaughter of the President, whom he met at a Chautauqua-sponsored conference in upstate New York. In a sort of apotheosis of Soviet-American relations, the two were married in Moscow last February. Sagdeev is currently a professor of physics at the University of Maryland, in College Park. Murray was reminded of the thesis by the playwright Georg Büchner concerning the death of Danton—that revolutions eat their young. "Sagdeev has been a revolutionary of the most admirable kind," he told me, "not only because he was pursuing peace and political freedom but also because as far back as Vega he revolutionized the relationship between the major powers to bring about a post-nationalist world. Sagdeev's force of personality and brilliance were enough to bring a cohesive leadership to Soviet planetary science. On Mars '94, we'll miss him deeply."

Still, Sagdeev's reign has laid solid foundations for the future. On the part of the Soviet scientists he worked with, the desire for collaboration with the Americans is as great as ever. When everything is balanced—Sagdeev's departure against the partial conversion of the Babakin engineers; his failure to achieve an international Phobos review board against the changes proposed for Mars '94, and the new funding arrangements—it appears that two steps have been taken forward and one step back, which is generally how *perestroika* works.

—HENRY S. F. COOPER, JR.

(*This is the first part of a two-part article.*)

MUSICAL EVENTS

A Myth Musicked

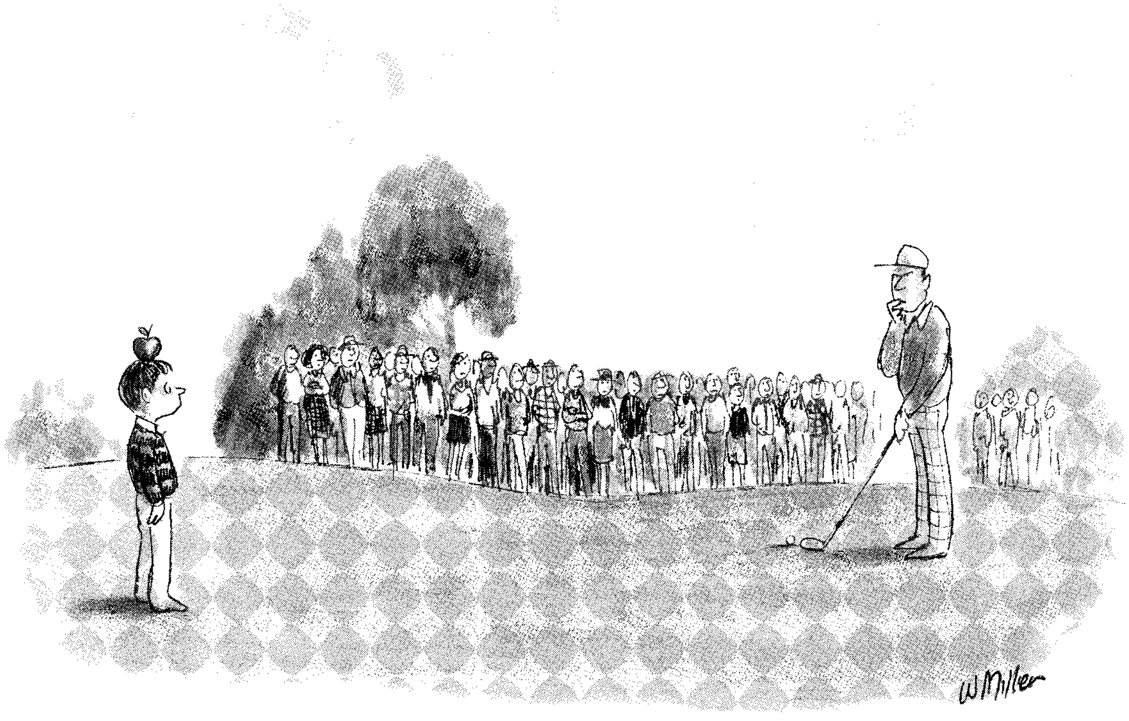
ROBIN HOLLOWAY'S opera "Clarissa," which he composed in 1976—from inner necessity, not to any commission—was given its first performance last month, by the English National Opera. It is not the first "Clarissa" opera: a version by Natale Parelli was performed in Vienna (1858) and, in English, in Philadelphia (1866); Frances Dickson, an American composer, wrote a "Clarissa"; Bizet began one but got no further than some sketches. Holloway was drawn to the subject, in 1968, before he had read Richardson's novel: its "simple and drastic" core—"man wants girl, she resists, he rapes her, she dies"—suggested to him "a vital role for music." Richardson, Angus Ross says in his introduction to the bulky Penguin edition, "had the luck or prescience to hit on a story that became a myth to his own age, and remains so yet." Holloway then read the book—probably the longest English novel, it was first published in seven volumes—and was daunted by the density and profusion of delicate psychological perception. It was years before his libretto took shape: the opera lay dormant, "stirring in secret," until one day it insisted on being composed; most of it was completed "in a three-week splurge." No company produced it. Holloway's next large-scale musical dramas, "Brand" (1981) and "Peer Gynt" (begun in 1984), were devised for the concert platform, and from "Clarissa" he extracted a "Clarissa Symphony," with soprano and tenor soloists, which was first performed in 1982. The symphony, which lasts about forty-five minutes, contains much of the finest music in the opera. It is a score to be urged on our big orchestras.

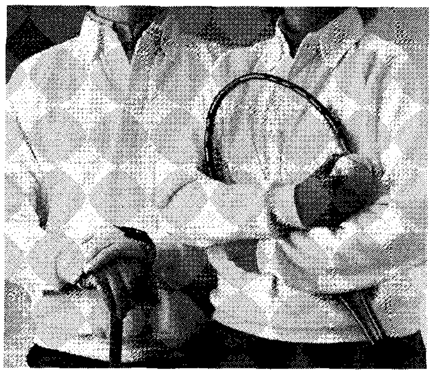
The first movement begins with the opera's prelude—the beating of Clarissa's heart, themes that represent Lovelace's desire for her and her thoughts of him—and passes to her desperation as her family impels her toward an odious match with "a man of sordid manners, disagreeable in his person and address, immensely rich":

> I don't know what to do, not I!—God forgive me, but I am very impatient!—I wish—but I don't know what to wish, without a sin!—Yet I wish it would please God to take me to his mercy!—I can meet with none here!—What a world is this! What is there in it desirable? The good we hope for, so strangely mixed, that one knows not what to wish for: and one half of mankind tormenting the other, and being tormented themselves in tormenting!

I quote the lines from Richardson. (Holloway adapts them slightly.) E. M. Forster quoted them in his "Aspects of the Novel," along with a passage of Henry James, to illustrate authors each "an anxious rather than an ardent psychologist," "sensitive to suffering," falling short of tragedy, "though a close approach is made"; and admirable writers both ("not a word out of place in their copious flows"). After Clarissa's monologue, her father—represented in the symphony by a trombone—thunders a curse on her. Rescue arrives in magical form: the walls of the room in which Clarissa has been locked dissolve into radiance and Lovelace appears, to lead her out into the light. Ancestors of this supernatural scene, which calls forth rich and beautiful music, are the magical apparition of Elsa's shining knight, in "Lohengrin," and the opening of Hunding's house to the spring night, in "Die Walküre."

For Clarissa, however, it's frying pan into fire: Lovelace leads her to a London brothel. The second movement is his soliloquy at the start of Act II. She has made a temporary escape. He feels in love as never before; he has a Fantasy in which a dream-Clarissa, played in the opera by a dancer, yields to his love, "eyes glowing . . . bosom heaving," and he sings a powerful Invocation: "Reward, O God of Love, as it deserves, my suffering impatience. . . . Deliver her body and soul to my will." The rest of the symphony is purely orchestral: Clarissa's Dream, a long dance sequence during which "the dream-Clarissa reappears and dances, enacting the real Clarissa's unconscious dreams and wishes" (there are striking, poignant pages during which the dream-Clarissa and Lovelace dance a slow waltz while shreds of a phantasmagoric quick waltz, danced by the company, swirl in the background); Rape, a brutally graphic piece of music;





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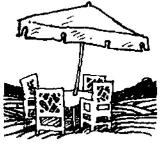

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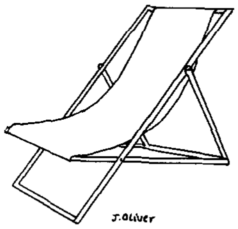
Lament and Acquiescence, an emotional orchestral interlude, kin to that in "Wozzeck"; and the closing pages of the opera as the heroine, like Gounod's Marguerite, dies and is received into Heaven.



The symphony comprises the essentials of the opera—all but the important, lyrical duet that divides Clarissa's Dream and the Rape. (If the composer could find his way to add it to the symphony, there would be a dramatically fuller version of "Clarissa" available for concert presentation.) The opera lives in monologues, duets, and orchestral episodes. It is not conventionally theatrical. Dr. Johnson's remark is famous: "Why, Sir, if you were to read Richardson for the story, your impatience would be so much fretted that you would hang yourself. But you must read him for the sentiment, and consider the story as only giving occasion to the sentiment." (Johnson called Richardson "an author who has enlarged the knowledge of human nature, and taught the passions to move at the command of virtue.") And for "the sentiment" we must listen to the opera. Holloway has said:

> Even when mapping out the action, above all when composing the music, my guidelines were always something like "What is she *really* thinking here?" or "What do her words make him feel?" I didn't see the stage with people making gestures. My position (in spite of a total incapacity for acting) was right inside them, feeling the rage, lust, fright, tenderness, or whatever; identifying with the lovers' psychology and physiology, down to the very heartbeat or throb of the pulse from which, in the opening prelude, the whole opera grows.

The piece is, in effect, a duodrama, with two long, demanding, emotionally complicated roles. The smaller parts—Clarissa's family and the sordid suitor; Miss Anna Howe, the recipient of most of Clarissa's letters—are little more than some necessary scaffolding (strong scaffolding, however, for Holloway is able and intelligent). Most of the "action" takes place in the music, and so the work presents peculiar difficulties of staging, especially in an age when opera audiences are encouraged to use their eyes more than their ears and minds. David Pountney, the director of the E.N.O. production, took an easy, conventional course. Instead of focussing attention on the actors of Clarissa and Lovelace, he dispersed it, and diminished them, by multiplication. The singing Lovelace competed during the Invocation with four mime doubles, busied with lewd actions. The big dance sequence was a spectacular display of five Clarissas and four Lovelaces running up a "mattress wall" and swinging about on ropes; it bore little relation to what the music expresses. The heroine was gang-raped by five Lovelaces, and not in the specified "almost complete darkness, but enough light to perceive obscure violence, outrage, menace, something frightening and uninterpretable." During the Lament and Acquiescence (for which total darkness is specified), six nightgowned Clarissas in a row before us writhed out their distress, clutching violated bodies and displaying blood-streaked linen. In the first-act finale—the fire at the brothel—a showy fire-breather, spewing great puffs of flame from his mouth, held center stage. In the second-act finale—Clarissa's death—Mr. Pountney seemed to be mocking Holloway's tender, transfigured music: a pair of large white wings was affixed to the heroine and she was drawn up on a wire into the flies. (The inspiration was presumably a Lovelace dream related in a letter to his companion Mr. Belford: "The most angelic form I had ever beheld, vested all in transparent white, descended from a ceiling, which, opening, discovered a ceiling above that, stuck round with golden cherubs and glittering seraphs, all exulting: Welcome, welcome, welcome! and, encircling my charmer, ascended with her to the region of seraphims.") A director need not feel himself bound by every stage direction in a score, but this production had visual imagery apter to a piece by, say, Penderecki and was coarsely at odds with the particular character of Holloway's "Clarissa." One might as well endeavor to enliven "Tristan und Isolde"—an opera in which a little, but not much, more "happens"—by filling the stage with five Tristans and six Isoldes, a pack of wolfhounds for Marke's hunt (to engage the eye during the King's long monologue), and a fire-breather to represent the flare of passion.

Holloway is a composer deeply versed in late-Romantic music: Schumann, Wagner, Strauss, Mahler, Alban Berg. His latest work is the orchestra piece "Wagner Nights," subtitled "Waltz-Sequence on Themes from 'Parsifal.' " Back in 1970, when he felt he had lost his way amid "atonal All-Bran," an orchestra piece called "Scenes from Schumann" burst from him, and he began composing newly romantic music with new freedom and joy. Since then he has been prolific, and has puzzled the critics. A 1979 issue of *Tempo* devoted to Holloway is seasoned with a sprinkling of "Dissenting Voices": "It is a little disappointing to find a composer of 29 relaxing, even in his athletic sections, into prewar musical images" (1973); "Mr. Holloway's music is much given to loving backward glances; he must beware of turning into a pillar of salt" (1975). He himself said, in 1977:

> If one spends months on end in one's formative years listening to "The Turn of the Screw" and "Peter Grimes," mixed up with the Five Orchestral Pieces and "Jeux," "The Dream of Gerontius" and the dances from "The Midsummer Marriage," the Four Last Songs, "Agon" and "Le Marteau sans Maître," curious transformations will take place that won't allow one to lose any of the elements, whatever the vicissitudes of later taste.

And in 1985:

> I don't think my composition is imitation or pastiche. It's like the excitement of stumbling upon an old Roman road, and realizing that this was the way across this landscape that used to be used, that everyone understood it, and everyone went that way. And now I can go this way too. It might be a bit overgrown but it's still the directest way between two points. It went this way because this was a very good way to go.

There is a distinction to be made between Holloway's music and what he calls "the flood of easy, brightly coloured, tonally tinged music that's being written at the moment," "all this soft-centred new tonal music that makes me scream and call for Xenakis." ("I want triadic and 'referential' music to be rigorous and strong, whether it's being craggy or whether it's being sweet.") The distinction is hard to define. Sometimes Holloway's allusions seem almost glib: the echoes of "La Valse" and "Jeux" in the "Clarissa" dances; the strongly Bergian flavor of the big interlude; above all, the recourse to "Walküre" magic fire music in the first finale. But most of the time I hear the workings of a mind at once well stocked, cultivated, fearless, inventive, and disciplined—not wallowing in nostalgia, yet glad to employ "tools" old or new to fashion new thoughts

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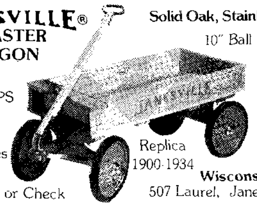

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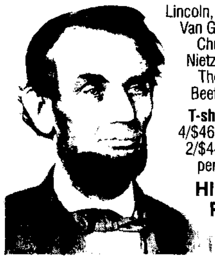

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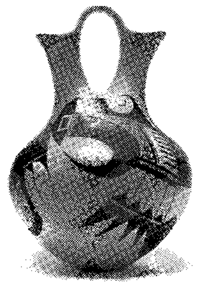

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into audible, communicative form. There is a difference between the mere surface imitation of Romantic sounds and harmonies, and Holloway’s brilliant, all-embracing command of structural device and procedure. “Clarissa” is a remarkable first opera. In places, the vocal writing—never the instrumental—lacks the vivid, gestural quality that brings sung words to life. The orchestra—as never in Wagner, who put first things first—sometimes steals attention from and swamps the singers, and rich wind-based textures cover most of the words. But the score has an exuberance and generosity, an imaginative power, and a delicacy and fineness of working which carry the day. Though the staging was insensitive, and ugly to look at, it was executed with force and efficiency, was never sloppy. The orchestral realization, under Oliver Knussen’s baton, was eloquent. Vivian Tierney, as the heroine, created a touching, credible, intricate character. Graeme Matheson-Bruce, the Lovelace, was less successful: blunt, dry of voice, and unromantic in appearance.

A SALUTE to the E.N.O.’s astonishing 1990-91 season. It is to contain no nineteenth-century operas—the staple of most houses—but, apart from three bicentenary Mozarts, only twentieth-century pieces. To be sure, “Tosca,” “Butterfly,” and “Schicchi” are there, and also such “classics” as “Rusalka,” “Pelléas,” “Salome,” “Bluebeard’s Castle,” “The Love of Three Oranges,” “The Cunning Little Vixen,” Busoni’s “Dr. Faust,” “Wozzeck,” “Oedipus Rex,” “Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk,” “Peter Grimes,” and “The Turn of the Screw.” But also Delius’s “Fennimore and Gerda,” Reimann’s “Lear,” Mark-Anthony Turnage’s “Greek,” and the première of Stephen Oliver’s “Timon of Athens.” Apart from the Mozarts, there are nine new productions and ten revivals.

IN April, the Opera Company of Philadelphia mounted two performances of Rossini’s opera semiseria “La Gazza Ladra” at the Academy of Music. James Galway was billed to play the title role on the first night, Jeanne Galway on the second. (In the event, Mrs. Galway undertook both performances.) This was a silly fancy: the magpie’s singing role is limited to a few squawks of “Pippo” and “Ninetta”; the bird’s principal action is to fly down, pick up a silver spoon, and make off with it, and an ingenious stage representation thereof provides simple, innocent pleasure at most “Gazza” performances. To have a mere human being in bird costume trip on and take the spoon is too easy. Mrs. Galway piped “Pippo” and “Ninetta” clearly and, onstage, tootled the flute part of Pippo’s brindisi. For the rest, Gray Veredon’s staging was plain—not unobtrusively so. The adventurous company has had money troubles lately, and so one cast a lenient eye on décor that seemed to consist largely of burlap hangings.

Ninetta is accused of stealing the spoon: there is an imposing trial scene, at which she is sentenced to death, and a powerful funeral march. The opera would be a tragedy were the magpie’s hoard not discovered in the nick of time. Ninetta was sung with charm and accomplishment by a rising young Italian soprano, Anna Caterina Antonacci, making her American début. The others—the cast is large—were of mixed merit. The production confirmed what a Town Hall concert performance in January had suggested: that this uncommonly long, ambitious, and very carefully composed opera—Mozartian in its mingling of the comic and the serious—holds the stage. It was exceptionally well conducted, by Steven Mercurio: alert as Abbado, but wittier; meticulous as Muti, but merrier. His tempi were ideal, his rhythms buoyant. No instrumental detail was scamped, and all was rendered with lightness and grace.

—ANDREW PORTER

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The technical aspect of the newspaper has also been re-evaluated. “Typos,” or mistakes in spelling and grammar, which makes comprehension difficult, has been made almost a thing of the past. After all, what is a story if you don’t understand *it*?
—Editorial in the Statesman, student newspaper of the State University of New York at Stony Brook.

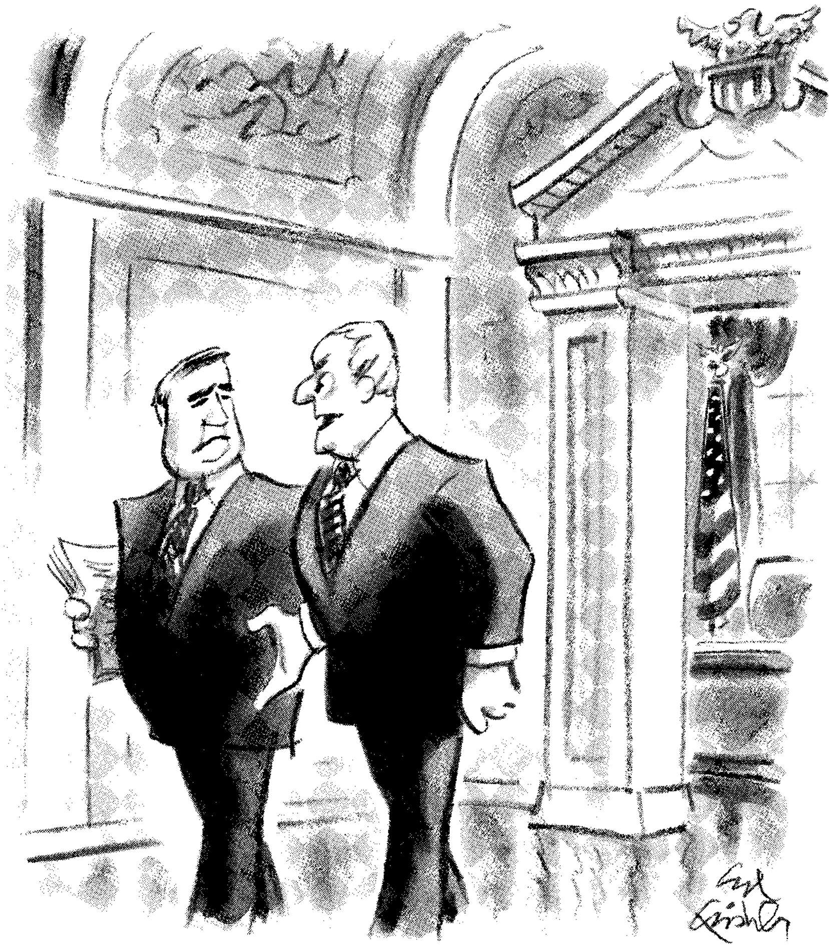
We give up.

LETTER FROM LONDON

"WE'RE back in London again," Mallarmé wrote to his friend Henri Cazalis in 1863, "the country of the fake Rubens paintings." The poet's judgment doubtless indicates a wider Gallic prejudice of the time, but it's no mere catty hyperbole. A casual tramp through the average stately home will take you past walls hung with pictures still confidently identified as being by Raphael, Rubens, El Greco, Rembrandt, Caravaggio, and other masters. Were most of them entered at auction, they would suffer the gentle torture of politely vilifying qualification—"school of," "style of," or the humiliating deletion of the painter's Christian name to denote uncertainty. It's not that the British are more naïve or more aesthetically dim than other races; it's simply that fakery follows wherever money leads (the Japanese taste for Impressionists and for the work of Bernard Buffet is doubtless inspiring contemporary forgers, while in Buenos Aires, for some reason, the favorite fakee is Guido Reni), and Britain has for many centuries run a financial surplus. Besides, an artist rarely produces at exactly the rate the market requires; spare capacity or spare cash is the usual condition. Sometimes this results in the artist's breaking his back or his talent to accommodate the patron. Thus Canaletto was known to the Venetians as "the painter the English spoiled" (and it does seem unfair that for all his fecundity there is scarcely a Canaletto to be seen in his native city). More usually, the gap between creative output and market demand is met by a merry band of fakers. Gazing at the rows of lifted and blackened "Old Masters" that still adorn the Big House, with their crazy-paving glaze and shameless attribution, one is tempted to imagine the circumstances of these questionable purchases some two or more centuries ago. It makes a little Italian genre scene, a picturesque morality. The svelte young milord posts into town on the second leg of his Grand Tour, accompanied only by a wise old tutor and a bag of doubloons; he expresses ardent interest in the local artists, and perhaps the more famous ones from the larger cities; and before Milord has dusted off his hat the word has gone out to old Luigi round the corner to put a little extra age on that veritable masterpiece he bodged together the week before last.

So London is the natural home for an exhibition on this subject. "Fake? The Art of Deception" (at the British Museum until September) is a most enticing show, and various to the point of being higgledy-piggledy: it takes in painting and sculpture, books and manuscripts, furniture, jewelry, pottery, stamps, coins, newspapers, cutlery, and torture instruments; it covers every civilization whose artifacts have attracted collectors and, therefore, fakers. It also serves as a wry example of curatorial economy, or how to make a silk purse out of a sow's ear. For where does this disgraced Dürer drawing, this dubious vellum miniature of Columbus landing in America, this dud "seventeenth century" Turkish carpet come from? Why, from the British Museum, the British Library, the Victoria and Albert Museum. What was shamefully consigned to the deepest vaults is now back on display, and the conned experts of yesteryear blush—or perhaps chuckle—from their graves.

As you wander round this Aladdin's cave of bogus objects, you also encounter a wide spread of the baser human motives: the lust to deceive, to make money unlawfully, to swindle the faithful (as with the Turin Shroud), to destabilize the enemy's currency, to undermine the democratic process (the "Zinoviev Letter," of 1924, which stirred up the classic Red Scare in Britain), to foment anti-Semitism (the Protocols of the Elders of Zion). But the show over all leaves one uplifted rather than depressed—exhilarated by human inventiveness, charmed by these guerrilla attacks on the authority of the cognoscenti, amused, and even reassured, by the gullibility of our species. Who could resist, for instance, the case of the little-known Canadian furbearing trout? Belief in this exceptional fish seems to have first arisen in the seventeenth century, when a Scotsman wrote home about the abundance of "furried animals and fish" in Canada, was asked



"So you forgot to call it 'a matter of profound pre-summit concern to this Administration.' Call it 'a matter of profound post-summit concern.'"

to provide a specimen, and duly did so. Fakes, in order to last more than a summer, must insert themselves into the appropriate crevice of probability and want: the Abominable Snowman, whose impressive tracks were almost certainly fabricated by a disgruntled British mountaineer, hits an exact nerve of phantasmagoric need in us. So did the bewhiskered trout: we imagine the deep and icy Canadian waters, and it suddenly seems plausible to us that survival is reserved only for those specimens which adapt—for instance, by sprouting fur. This fishy canard has tenaciously endured, and in recent years has been kept alive by an Ontario entrepreneur. In the early nineteen-seventies, an inquirer brought one of his products—white rabbit fur neatly attached to a brown trout—to the Royal Scottish Museum. The museum recognized the hoax and so didn't retain the object. But news of the "find" got out, and public demand was such that the museum was obliged to re-create the furbearing trout. And this hallucinatory hybrid—a rare double fake, in fact, being a fake of a fake—now takes its rightful place in the British Museum show alongside a caseful of other questionable items of zoology: a unicorn's horn, a griffin's claw, a couple of mermen (dried monkey atop a fishtail), and the famous "Vegetable Lamb of Tartary."

There are various sinister examples of "hostile fakes." During the Second World War, for example, the Germans produced an excellent set of standard British postage stamps with two minute and subversive emendations: the crown above King George VI's head was topped off by a Star of David, and the "D" of the pence sign was constructed from a hammer and sickle. (It seems from this distance an improbable insult to claim that the impeccably British monarch consorted with both Jews and Communists, but totalitarian abuse delights in the portmanteau mode: Shostakovich in his memoirs recalls Zhdanov's berating of the poet Akhmatova as "both a slut and a nun.") In the main, however, there is frequently a kind of tender complicity between faker and victim: I want you to believe that such-and-such is the case, says the faker; you want to believe it, too, and in order to cement that belief you, for your part, will give me a great deal of money, and I, for my part, will laugh behind your back. The deal is done. And public opinion, which likes to see the humiliation of the expert, usually gets over its first shudder of moral disapproval and ends up gleefully on the side of the faker. The best-known British art forger of postwar years, for instance, was a man named Tom Keating. Born in 1917, he had hopes of a regular career as an artist—or, at least, as an art teacher—but when thwarted he began to diversify, first into art "restoration" at the shadier end of the market and then into straight forgery. He claimed to have produced a couple of thousand "Sexton Blakes"—as he referred, in Cockney rhyming slang, to his fakes—over a period of twenty years, specializing in the work of Samuel Palmer. He was finally unmasked in 1976 by the art-market correspondent of the *Times*. Keating then made a general confession at a press conference, claiming (with some justification) that he had begun forging as a protest against the exploitation of artists by dealers, and adding that he had in any case frequently given away his sly simulacra. He was arrested the following year, but the case never came to court: all charges were dropped, because of Keating's poor health. Thereafter, his popularity rose no end: his "Sextons" changed hands at respectable prices, he gave a series of television lectures on the painting techniques of the great masters, and after his death, in 1984, a sale of his work fetched two hundred and seventy-four thousand pounds—seven times the auctioneers' estimate.

Keating's case offers a paradigm, and the fact that his forgeries often aren't much good increases his lovability: not only is the art market fooled but it's fooled even by bad stuff. Similarly, we admire the chutzpah of the two potters who produced "Bernard Leach" pots (with convincing seals) good enough to fool the major auction houses, and we admire them the more for doing so from the obscurity of the pottery class at Fetherstone Prison, Wolverhampton. We applaud the medieval fakes of Billy and Charley, a pair of Victorian mud larks who perceived that instead of combing the Thames foreshore in search of antiquities it was quicker to invent their own. (At their trial, in the early eighteen-sixties, the scholar Charles Roach Smith argued

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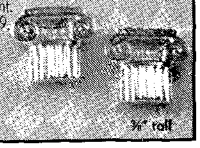

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for the authenticity of the "finds" on the ground that no forger would have produced anything so preposterous.) Even when we ourselves are the potential victims, we cannot always find it in us to get unalloyedly furious. That bogus Lacoste shirt, the bottle of "Johnnie Hawker" Scotch whiskey, the repro Vuitton luggage, the imitation Lego kits: of course we are being cheated (and so is the original manufacturer), but there is also something that makes us ask, Why do I value the maker's name so much? Is not my need for authenticity a bit absurd? If Johnnie Hawker makes me just as drunk as Johnnie Walker, why should I feel myself hard done by?

The British Museum show concludes with a handy section on the detection of fakes. Here there is, happily, still room for the scholar's intuition—the young Kenneth Clark first rumbled a "Botticelli" Madonna by pointing out that she had the face of a twenties screen goddess—but increasingly it is a matter of science: microscopy, ultraviolet and X-radiography, dendrochronology, thermoluminescence. And here again one often ends up more than a little on the forger's side. He (and it is always "he," for the profession is not as yet an equal-opportunity employer) has done his best, and the world has been fooled—indeed, the world has come to love and venerate his artifact—when along comes a white-coated spoilsport who blows the gaff. A particularly appealing case is that of the Agincourt spur, which for many years lived a quietly respectable life in the Victoria and Albert Museum's arms-and-armor collection. It consists of a genuine fifteenth-century spur round and through which the gnarled root of a tree has grown; a gilt-copper plaque set into the wood asserts that the item was picked up on the battlefield of Agincourt. And how evocative it seems to be: one imagines the loose spur falling from a knight's charger as Henry V's archers put the French to flight; it lies there disregarded until a sapling grows through it and lifts it back into human view, whereupon, centuries after the battle, a passing military-souvenir hunter . . . But none of this, alas, is likely. Dendrologists have gone to work and established that the wooden element in this resonant knickknack is almost certainly spruce. And one of the things about spruce is that it happens not to grow in the Pas de Calais. Another ingenious bodger (the more ingenious, since he used a spur that was genuinely fifteenth century) has finally received his comeuppance.

PICTURESQUE fakery, of course, doesn't stop at the museum's exit or the art collector's back door: it is embedded in many aspects of British life, just as that stub of spruce is wound into the Agincourt spur. Imagine yourself leaving that English stately home which boasts so many custom-produced Renaissance masters on its walls. You are feeling a little peckish, so in the next village, where TV satellite dishes sprout amid the thatched roofs, you wander into the Olde Englishe pub, called something like The Bear and Ragged Staff. You scrutinize the list of bar snacks and order a "ploughman's lunch." This staple of the pub menu consists, you discover, of a slab of cheese, a hunk of bread, a pickled onion or two, and perhaps a tomato or a lettuce leaf. As you munch away, you picture to yourself some yokel out of Thomas Hardy setting off to work with just such a lunch wrapped in his red-spotted handkerchief; and, before him, that ploughman of Thomas Gray's who homeward plodded his weary way while the curfew tolled the knell of parting day and the lowing herd wound slowly o'er the lea—he, too, must have enjoyed just such a snack. Well, he might have done, but, if so, it would have been a merry coincidence. For the ploughman's lunch began its true active life as a concept and a meal only in the early nineteen-sixties, when advertisers were trying to find ways of encouraging people to eat in pubs; the solution was to tickle them with history.

The British are good at tradition; they're also good at the invention of tradition. You travel north after your ploughman's lunch and reach Scotland, home of the bagpipes, the kilt, the clan tartan, and so on. What could be more authentic than all this noble survival of the old Scottish way of life? But things are not so neat. The harp, not the pipes, was the traditional local instrument, and the bagpipes came into broad fashion only after the Act of Union with England of 1707. The kilt was invented at some point between 1727 and 1734 by an English Quaker from Lancashire named Thomas Rawlinson. He was an ironmaster who built a furnace

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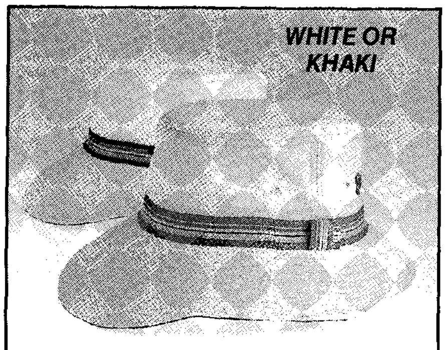

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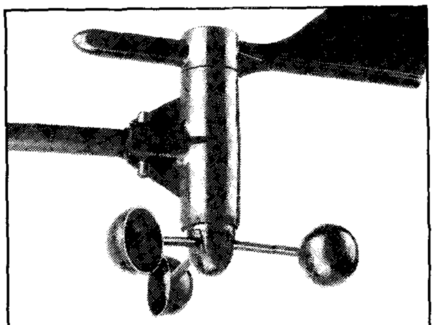
near Invergarry and adapted the traditional belted plaid of the Highlander (which proved thoroughly inconvenient when felling trees and working the furnace) into the pleated skirt now deemed practically antediluvian. The development of the clan tartan is even more of a kick in the teeth for historical sentimentalists. Eighteenth-century records show different patterns of tartan being worn in the Highlands, but the distinctions they marked were of region and social status rather than clan; it was only in the early nineteenth century (partly thanks to the influence of Walter Scott) that particular tartans were ascribed to particular clans. And the establishment of "ancient Highland dress" depended partly on the resourcefulness of modern manufacturers. The most famous of them, William Wilson & Son, of Bannockburn, saw the commercial advantage of building up a repertoire of rival clan tartans. A focus for the sales pitch was the state visit of George IV to Edinburgh in 1822—an occasion for the gathering of the clans in all their antique splendor. In anticipation of this, the firm prepared a "Key Pattern Book" and sent samples of its various tartans up to London, where they were "authenticated" by the Highland Society as belonging to this or that clan. But orders swiftly outran historical plausibility. The records of William Wilson & Son survive, so we are able to see that when, for instance, Cluny Macpherson (heir, incidentally, of the Macpherson who "discovered" the bogus medieval poet Ossian) applied for his tartan, he was given one off the peg. It was now, and henceforth, labelled Macpherson. But the same design had previously been sold in bulk to a Mr. Kidd to clothe his West Indian slaves, when it had been known as Kidd. Before that, it had been listed simply as No. 155.

The blithe and ruthless tartanization of Scotland has continued apace. In the middle of March, the climax of the annual Five Nations Rugby-football championship (England, Wales, Scotland, Ireland, France) took place at Murrayfield Stadium, in Edinburgh. The only two unbeaten teams in the competition at that point were England and Scotland, so the press was awash with references to ancient battles in which the English defeated the Scots or, preferably, vice versa. The air churned with a very recently minted anthem called "Flower of Scotland"; the skirl of the pipe band heralded the conflict; the grandstands were a mazy blur of kilt and sporran. After an emotional Scottish victory, it would have been a brave Englishman who turned to his Caledonian neighbor and murmured, "Isn't that the tartan of Kidd the slaver?"

The British, like any other nation, aren't keen on having their invented traditions exposed to them: they react with the mortified disbelief exhibited by Harry in "When Harry Met Sally" when Sally fakes orgasm in a public place. If we can't believe *that*, what can we believe? And, since individual identity depends in part upon national identity, what happens when those symbolic props to national identity turn out to be no more authentic or probable than a furbearing trout? What happens if the Queen turns out to be a foreigner (which to some extent she is, the royal House of Windsor having been the House of Saxe-Coburg until a diplomatic name change in 1917), or if we can't rely upon the British Christmas (which to some extent we can't, it being largely a Victorian invention)? Even the British crown jewels are not above suspicion: a forthcoming report, commissioned by the Lord Chamberlain's Office, reveals, for instance, that the Black Prince's Ruby, which tourists admire at the Tower of London, had little connection with the Black Prince and is, in any case, a spinel of inferior quality. This need for authenticity, this lust for integrity, applies equally to the commercial world—or, rather, to how the commercial world is perceived by those outside it. When I was a child, in the early fifties, I was much attached to my local Woolworth's. I liked its variety of goods, its cheapness, its user-friendly shelves (which facilitated a few illegal additions to my stamp collection); most of all, I liked its reliable fascia, "F. W. Woolworth & Co." Wherever in England you went, there in the High Street would be that gilt lettering on a burgundy background—F. W. Woolworth & Co., part of the very fabric of England. But this fabric turned out to be no more authentic than a Scottish tartan. One day, when I was ten or so, I was informed that Woolworth's was an American business. Of course, I declined to believe it. I would have had



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to redefine Englishness (beyond my childish capacity) if I had believed that.

THIS sense of puzzlement and vague betrayal has been more widely felt during one of the longest and most Byzantine commercial sagas of recent times: the sale of the most famous shop in England, Harrods. For as long as Mrs. Thatcher has been in power, there has been a continuing and less than dignified scuffle for ownership of this Knightsbridge store. In fact, Harrods was only one of more than a hundred shops owned by the parent group and purchasee, the House of Fraser, but such was and is its enduring power as a British symbol that for prospective owners and the gawping public alike the battle has been about "who owns Harrods." The British middle classes may be able to afford to shop there only during the biannual sale (when some of the goods are brought in, and are therefore not authentically Harrodian), but this increases rather than diminishes the mystique. Even those who have never stepped inside its doors proudly quote the supposed reply of the Harrods assistant faced with a fantastical inquiry: "The impossible takes a little longer, sir." And this extra symbolic glitter naturally makes the institution alluring to outside plunderers. In the old imperial days, the British looted the treasure houses of their dominions (sometimes in the nicest possible way, of course, but sometimes not); now that the British are less dominant, their own prizes are up for grabs. It's perhaps no surprise that the two main aspirants to ownership of Harrods over the last ten years have been what the City of London considers underprivileged outsiders; that's to say, foreigners who have made, rather than inherited, their wealth.

The first of them is Roland (Tiny) Rowland, the German-born chief executive of the international trading company Lonrho, whose many possessions include the *Observer* Sunday newspaper, edited by Donald (Tiny) Trelford. (The rather British difference between the two Tinys should be explained: Tiny Rowland is called Tiny because he is very tall, Tiny Trelford because he is—well, tiny.) Rowland has attempted on three occasions to buy the House of Fraser group, his most publicized failure coming in 1981, when the Monopolies and Merg-

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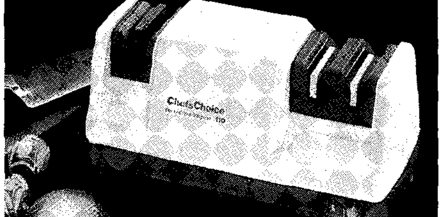

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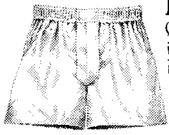

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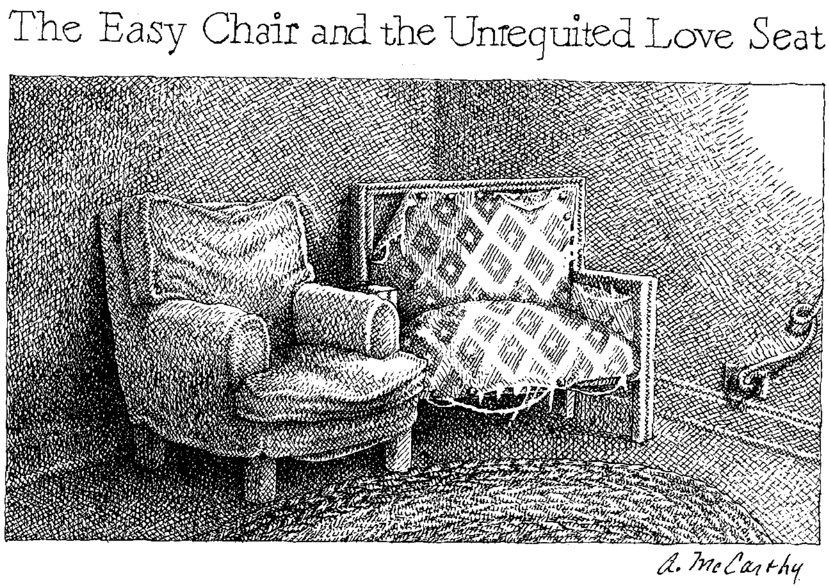

The Easy Chair and the Unrequited Love Seat
A. McCarthy

• •

ers Commission, a government regulatory agency, turned down his bid, on the ground that Lonrho ownership would cause "at least a very real and substantial risk that the efficiency of Fraser would deteriorate seriously." This rejection did not come completely out of the blue, for Rowland was already a member of the extremely select clique of major capitalists who have managed to offend against even the constitutionally lax rules of capitalism, and he had been publicly rebuked for it. In 1973, in the House of Commons, the Conservative Prime Minister Edward Heath described Rowland's business practices as "the unpleasant and unacceptable face of capitalism," a tag that has stuck ever since, and merited the uncharismatic former Prime Minister his sole entry in the Oxford Dictionary of Quotations. The only other tycoon of similar standing to have been so stigmatized in Britain over the last quarter of a century was the newspaper magnate (and publisher of Ceausescu, Zhivkov, Husák, and Kádár) Robert Maxwell, who was described in 1971 by a Department of Trade and Industry inquiry as being "not in our opinion a person who can be relied upon to exercise proper stewardship of a publicly quoted company." Needless to say, Mr. Maxwell has continued to run an increasing number of publicly quoted companies, while Mr. Rowland's face, unacceptable as it may have been to liberal Conservatism, has grown plumper with the ingestion of more and more enterprises.

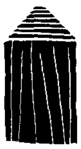
The second claimant for the liver-spotted hand of Harrods was Mohamed Al-Fayed, an Egyptian businessman about whom not much was known when he first emerged except that he appeared to have large amounts of cash and his checks never bounced. He began, in the mid-nineteen-fifties, as a protégé of the distinguished arms dealer Adnan Khashoggi, to whose sister he was married, and he prospered as a middleman. With his brothers, Ali and Salah, he developed interests in banking, construction, oil, and property. He bought the Paris Ritz, took a second, Finnish wife, and lived the normal life of the superrich: homes in Paris and London, an estate in Surrey, a castle in Scotland, a villa in Gstaad, yachts in the South of France, armor-plated Mercedeses, bodyguards, and so on. But it was a fairly private life compared with that of Khashoggi, and was even marked by occasional benefactions. He gave financial support to the ultra-British film "Chariots of Fire," and at the invitation of the mayor of Paris, Jacques Chirac, undertook the refurbishment of the Duke and Duchess of Windsor's house in the Bois de Boulogne. (Some said that, failing to understand the Windsors' renegade status, he hoped the job would ingratiate him with the Royal Family.)

By the end of 1984, Rowland was still hanging around the church like a much rebuffed bridegroom, hoping that a ban, imposed by the Department of Trade and Industry, on Lonrho's making a bid for Harrods would be lifted. But he had retained 29.9 per cent of the House of Fraser's shares, and now agreed to sell them to Mohamed Al-Fayed (who had himself served on the board of Lonrho back in the seventies). Rowland offered the stock at three hundred pence a share, or fifty pence above the market price, on condition that he was paid in cash within forty-eight hours. Al-Fayed replied that Rowland could have the money within twenty-four hours. It must have seemed a sound enough deal to Rowland: first, he turned a decent profit, and, second, everyone knew that Al-Fayed did not have nearly enough money to mount a full-scale bid for the House of Fraser. If the D.T.I. subsequently rescinded its ban on Lonrho, Rowland could always buy back the 29.9 per cent. It was at this point, however, that someone shuffled the script. Rowland sold to Al-Fayed on November 2, 1984. On March 4, 1985, to everyone's surprise and to Rowland's fury, Al-Fayed bid for all the remaining shares of the House of Fraser, and the company's board, eager to escape the Unacceptable Face of Capitalism, swiftly accepted.

Two immediate questions were raised. Where on earth did the extra money—four hundred and fifty million pounds in cash, at a low estimate—come from? And would Al-Fayed be allowed to get away with the purchase without scrutiny from the Monopolies and Mergers Commission? Whereupon the story broadens politically, and brings in the richest man in the world: the Sultan of Brunei. The Sultan had come to the attention of the British government and public a year and a half earlier: in August, 1983, he had withdrawn the Brunei Reserve Fund, worth $5.7 billion, from the Crown Agents in Britain, to the noticeable detriment of sterling. In 1985, the following events occurred, some or all of which may be connected: In January, the Sultan of Brunei bought London's Dorchester Hotel—a deal fronted by Mohamed Al-Fayed, using a power of attorney to draw funds on the Sultan's behalf. On March 4th, Mohamed Al-Fayed and his brothers were suddenly revealed to be much richer than anyone thought they had a right to be. On March 14th, the Minister for Trade and Industry, Norman Tebbit, announced that he would not be referring the Al-Fayed bid for Harrods to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission; he also released Lonrho from the ban on its making a bid—by which time, of course, it was too late, as the Al-Fayeds had already acquired the fifty-one per cent of the company's shares they needed. Later in the year, as the sterling crisis deepened, with the pound falling to $1.04 and a continuing miners' strike threatening to make things even worse, the Sultan of Brunei transferred five billion pounds into sterling to help prop up the British currency. Whereupon the pound sat up in bed and took a little soup, staggering back to $1.08.

The brothers Al-Fayed now owned Harrods, but Lonrho kicked up such a fuss that a Department of Trade and Industry inquiry was ordered into the circumstances of the takeover. In 1988, its report was presented to the new Trade Minister, Lord Young, but a delay of publication was immediately imposed, on the ground that criminal investigations into the takeover were being conducted by the Fraud Squad. The chief executive of Lonrho continued to fume, and the following year, when the report had still not been published, Tiny Rowland (or one of his adjutants) slipped Tiny Trelford (or one of his adjutants) a bootleg copy of the report, which Trelford published as a special, unprecedented midweek edition of the Sunday *Observer*. It was enjoined shortly after it hit the streets, but Rowland, who by then seemed to be the only person in the country still interested in the ownership of Harrods, had managed to keep the story running.

Finally, this March, five years after the government gave the Al-Fayed brothers the nod, a seven-hundred-and-fifty-two-page report—by a High Court judge and an accountant—was published, and everyone got excited again. The *Times* ran the front-page headline " 'LYING FAYEDS' KEEP HARRODS" over a large photograph of Mohamed Al-Fayed, straw-boatered and white-coated, slicing up a salami in the Harrods food department. The D.T.I. inspectors declared that the brothers, both before and after their bid for the House of Fraser, had "dishonestly represented" their origins, wealth, business interests, and resources to the Secretary of State, the Office of Fair Trading, the press, the House of Fraser board, the company's shareholders, and even to their own financial advisers. The "catalogue of lies" makes interesting reading, not least for its great variety of category: some of the lies seem to be calculated deceptions; others seem to the outsider like normal business practice; still others do no more than comically reflect the quaint British snobbery of those who compiled the report. The Al-Fayeds, the inspectors concluded, had inflated their income, had exaggerated the start-up wealth they possessed when they left Egypt, and had failed to come clean about the origins of their mysterious cash injection. They claimed to have had a fleet of ships that survived Nasser's nationalization, whereas in fact they had owned only two sixteen-hundred-ton cargo ferries at the time. In 1964, Mohamed had spent seven months in Haiti, where he posed as a Kuwaiti sheikh, obtained two valuable government concessions, and decamped after cheating Papa Doc out of a hundred thousand dollars (which some might consider merited a medal for public service as much as a rebuke). The brothers' father had not, as they maintained, been close friends with the Sultan of Brunei. The yacht Dodi, which they claimed had always been in the family, was not acquired until 1962. And so on. Nor were their standards of veracity any better when it came to their personal lives and background. They did not, as they had said and allowed to be repeated, come from an old, established Egyptian family who had been shipowners and industrialists for more than a hundred years; on the contrary, they came from "respectable but humble origins" and were "the sons of teachers." They had supplied false birth certificates, lowering their ages by between four and ten years. They had "improved" their name from Fayed to Al-Fayed. Finally, their claim to have been subjected in childhood to the benign influence of British nannies was rejected as false.



Backbench Conservative M.P.s reacted to the report with pop-eyed rage. Don't let the crooks get away with it! Take the shop away from them! Damn Gippo parvenus—first let them into the club and then it turns out they didn't even have proper nannies! Such was the tenor of their remarks. Sir Edward du Cann, a former chairman of the powerful Tory backbench pressure group the 1922 Committee, demanded that Harrods be stripped of its four royal warrants (the public sign that the store supplies members of the Royal Family), adding, "I think the Fayeds should be forced to leave the country." However, since Sir Edward is currently the chairman of Lonrho,

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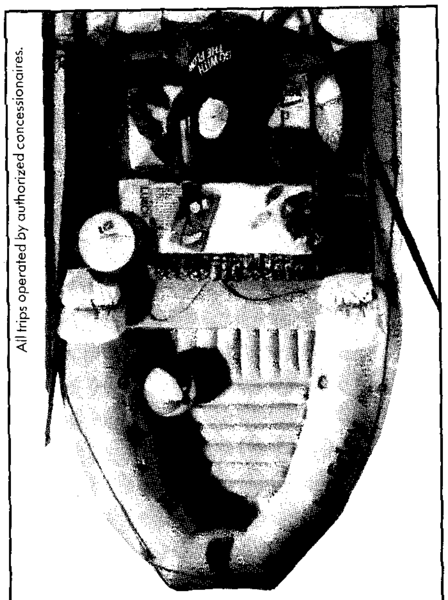
his remarks may not have been entirely objective. In contrast with all this backbench clamor, the Conservative Cabinet has throughout the affair shown an extraordinary, almost heroic consistency. Despite the fiercest pressures, it has tenaciously stuck to the principle of laissez-faire and has most actively remained passive. The first Trade Secretary to be involved, Norman Tebbit, declined to refer the Al-Fayed bid to the Monopolies Commission. The second, Lord Young, followed this lead, and also declined to publish the D.T.I. report. Sir Patrick Mayhew, the Attorney General, declined to prosecute. The third Trade Minister involved, Nicholas Ridley, did even better. Naturally, he declined to refer the matter to the Monopolies Commission. Naturally, he declined to disqualify the brothers from being company directors, as he could have done. But he far outstripped his predecessors in apathy. His entire statement to the Commons on the Harrods affair and the inspectors' epic report lasted a mere two minutes, and ended, "No other matters require action from me." The nearest he came to any judgment on the whole business was to say, "Anyone who reads the report can decide for themselves what they think of the conduct of those involved."

So what are we to decide? Tory M.P.s cry bounder and rogue. Labour M.P.s cry fraud and coverup (plus bounder and rogue). The Sultan of Brunei, who declined to coöperate with the inquiry, continues to deny that any of his money was involved in the purchase. (The inspectors' theory runs as follows: the Fayeds used their association with the Sultan, and their possession of wide powers of attorney, to raise money on their own account. This would explain the sudden, huge influx of funds, and also why the Sultan has severed contact with his former representatives.) The Fayed brothers, having lost their "Al-" throughout the British press, continue to own Harrods, even if it is now smearily nicknamed Harrabs in some quarters. Mohamed Fayed, who never had a British nanny, continues to slice up salami in the food hall whenever there is a photo opportunity. Harrods itself has gone from being a publicly owned company to being a family business whose parent organization, in Liechtenstein, is beyond British scrutiny and British law. And the Conservative Government, if we are to believe some Labour analysts, has discovered a new way of rescuing the currency when it bumps against the seabed. What does it cost? Just the occasional national monument. Harrods this time, Windsor Castle the next.

As for Tiny Rowland, he continues, as he has done all through the affair, to dispatch bizarre and hectoring circular letters to Members of Parliament and other opinion-formers. They are printed on fine paper and sturdily bound, like an investment prospectus; inside, they mix ferocious denunciations of the Fayeds with lofty calls to arms. In their obsessiveness they are, in a way, love letters to Harrods. The latest, a sixteen-pager (of March 27th), typically entitled "Practise to Deceive," catalogues the recent high crimes and misdemeanors of the Fayeds—roughly, bleeding Harrods dry and cooking the books—but also comes up with a novel line of attack. Rowland analyzes statements that the brothers made to the D.T.I. inspectors about their periods of residence in Britain (which do make very contradictory reading) and concludes that, whatever they may have claimed officially for tax purposes, they are and have been resident in Britain for many years. This, Rowland points out, makes them taxable in this country. "There is one regulatory body still to act," he writes, and bursts into capitals with the new threat: "THE INLAND REVENUE." The Fayeds, he calculates, have over the years evaded "hundreds of millions" of pounds in income tax. Worse—though much better, of course, for Rowland—if, as they claim, they purchased the House of Fraser with their own money, "then their funds are the taxable funds of United Kingdom residents, bringing the outstanding Tax payable to one billion pounds. That is the position today." One billion pounds: as precise as that. It seems unlikely, however, that the Revenue will heed this public-spirited tipoff, and Rowland himself clearly doubts it. "All is silent," he laments on the final page of his letter. "No dogs bark." Except that Rowland still howls from his kennel: in May, Lonrho issued a writ against Norman Tebbit, claiming "substantial damages" against the former Trade Secretary on grounds of negligence and abuse of ministerial powers.

What is the color of money? Amid the empurpled Tory rage, it's hard to make out whether the Fayeds' main offense is to have been (a) deceitful, (b) parvenu, or (c) Egyptian. Probably all three. Had the Sultan of Brunei come out and said *he* wanted to buy Harrods, we probably wouldn't have minded; but then he not only had topnotch British nannies, he also went to Sandhurst. (Though behind the snobbery a central point remains: if the money used to buy Harrods was not unequivocally owned by the Fayeds, then debt financing would have to take priority over capital investment, and the stability of the company might be affected.) In general, the Conservative Government has taken a relaxed view of foreign companies' buying up parts of Britain. (Stop press: The American food-products giant CPC International has just bought three staples of the British kiddie's pig-out—Ambrosia creamed rice; Bovril, an umber spread made from ground-up ox; and Marmite, a vegetarian equivalent, of take-no-hostages pungency.) As for the Labour Party, though instinctively protectionist, it, too, has its practical moments. For instance, I live in the London Borough of Camden. Like many other Labour councils squeezed by a Tory central government over the last decade, Camden's at one point succumbed to a bit of creative accounting. In a striking (or perhaps batty) financial coup, it sold all the parking meters in the borough to a French bank and then leased them back. The council benefitted by a capital sum, though quite what was in it for the French bank was a mystery to us locals. It also became a strange experience to park your car and reflect that the meter you were feeding belonged to the French. You felt as if you ought to insert a five-franc piece instead of fifty pence. And it has to be said that Gallic ownership has made no difference to the efficiency of these stubbornly temperamental machines.

IT'S not just the parking meters, the creamed rice, and Harrods. These days, we don't even own the *Times*. First, it was bought by a Canadian, Roy Thomson, and now it belongs to Rupert Murdoch, an Australian who couldn't even be relied upon to stay an Australian but turned into an American, no doubt for the best of business reasons. At least the editor has remained traditionally British, and the new one, appointed in mid-March,



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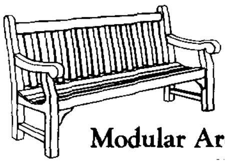

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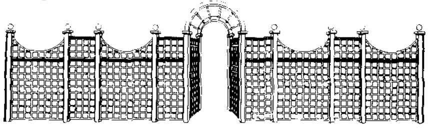

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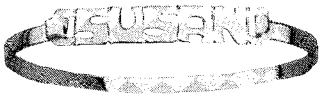

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couldn't be more so. Simon Jenkins is Murdoch's fourth editor in a decade, a period during which the newspaper's finances have remained healthy but its personality has endured a running state of trauma. The *Times*, of course, has always attracted labels and expectations like no other newspaper: from "the Thunderer," of Victorian days, to "the newspaper of record," "the noticeboard of the Establishment," "the Top People's Paper," and so on. There is, naturally, a rival view as well: the *Times* is the paper that sought to appease Hitler in the late thirties, and a decade later kissed its hand to Stalin. "The Sycophants' Gazette," it was called recently by Edward Pearce, a maverick right-wing columnist. "In truth," wrote Pearce, "the old *Times* was a rotten paper, incapable of being judged objectively since it was not sustained by objective merits but [by] levitating two feet off the ground by divine will, like St Joseph of Copertino."

Still, even this Josephine trickery serves to mark the *Times* out from other journals, suggesting some cherished ideal of what it might be or perhaps once was. This notion has been under attack now for some time—internally, thanks to an editorial and marketing course of such zigzaggery that you would have thought the paper was trying to shake readers off rather than attract them, and, externally, by the rise of one particular rival. From the beginning of history, there were only three "quality" dailies in Britain. On the left, the *Guardian;* on the right, the *Times;* a bit farther to the right, the *Daily Telegraph*. That was all there was, and that, conventional wisdom claimed, was all there was room for. Change happened only when newspapers died; they didn't get born anymore. However, this lethargic cartel was broken in 1986 by the arrival of the *Independent*, a fresh-faced, tycoon-free, unaligned, upmarket, new-technology daily. Old Fleet Street hands tended to discount its chances: Anthony Howard, the former editor of both *The New Statesman* and *The Listener*, and deputy at the time to Tiny Trelford, at the *Observer*, widely predicted that the paper would fail, and that its editor would be out within six months. Undeterred, the paper has flourished and is steadily beginning to overhaul its established rivals: the last set of audited circulation figures showed the *Guardian* at 433,530, the

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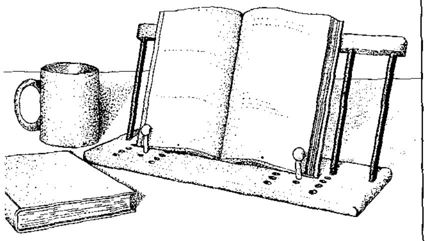

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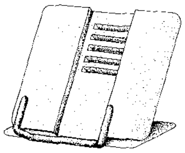

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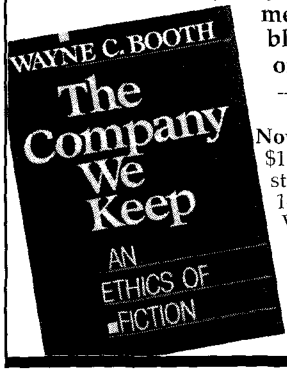

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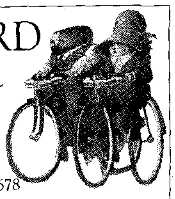

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Times at 431,811, and the *Independent* at 415,609. Mr. Howard himself, a rueful smile on his face, now writes a weekly column for the *Independent*.

It's not just circulation, either. The *Independent* has shaken up newspaper design, with much bolder use of photographs (a move the *Guardian* has followed); it put strong foreign correspondents in place at a time when news values were generally becoming more Anglocentric, and ran the first stirrings in Eastern Europe on its front page before its rivals did; it teasingly produced a color supplement largely in black-and-white, and offered broad, vivacious obituaries, which contrasted sharply with the turgid necrologies of Sir Tufton Bufton and his ilk to be found in the *Times*. While being "independent," the new paper has swiftly built up its own establishment, which alarmingly overlaps with that of the old *Times*. A small but pertinent distress signal blew when Graham Greene, inveterate writer of letters to the *Times* and genial provocateur, started sending his letters to the *Independent*. In one of his earliest statements after taking office, Simon Jenkins, asked to say which of his immediate rivals he was targeting, named them all, but added, "There is only one paper which, five years ago, put its tanks on our lawn and that is the *Independent*." This is indeed the case, though it has to be said that the tanks went in with hardly a shot's being fired, while the front fence hadn't been mended for years.

And when you get inside this famous stately home you find that the walls are peeling, the linen-fold panelling has been ripped out, and most of the (probably genuine) Old Masters have been sold off. Visitors are still happy to pay the entrance charge, but many leave shaking their heads at the way the old place has been run down. All of which makes the appointment of Simon Jenkins thoroughly appropriate not just in fact but also in metaphor. He first made his name, in the early seventies, as a journalist campaigning to save bits of London from the property developers, and helped found an organization called Save Britain's Heritage. Now he has been handed the biggest heritage-saving job of his career.

Jenkins, who is forty-six, is a cultivated and charming man, dapper in appearance, scrupulously polite yet intellectually steely; very English, while also being married to the American actress Gayle Hunnicutt. He is a writing editor, with an excellent track record: as a campaigner; as the editor, at thirty-three, of the London *Evening Standard;* and then as the political editor of *The Economist* for seven years. For the last four, he was a columnist on the *Sunday Times*, while also occupying himself with the sort of great-and-good roles (on the board of British Rail) which normally come later in life. He had resigned from the *Sunday Times* and was just about to join the *Independent* when head-hunted by the *Times*. Ironically, he now has to go into daily battle with the paper he nearly joined, convincing himself that it isn't really as good as he thought, scouting for weaknesses, and giving added credence to any whispers of financial instability.

But does the *Times* still have any symbolic value? Is it still "the newspaper of record"? (And does that phrase, in any case, mean much? Surely all newspapers aspire to be newspapers of record; the phrase is as redundant as "investigative journalist.") Rather to his surprise, Jenkins says, he finds that the *Times* legend retains its force. "There's something about British newspaper readers," he says. "They want there to be a *Times* even if they don't read it. It's like wanting the Royal Family to be there, or a rural station to be kept open even if they don't use it." Much good will remains, though of a rigorous kind: the *Times* doesn't just have readers; it has fingernail monitors. If a journalist puts "Lady Miranda Spofforth" instead of "Miranda, Lady Spofforth" (or vice versa), stern letters flow from rectory and dower house. After Lord Rothschild's death recently, the *Times* obituary muddled up his succession, and the rebukes came in like thrown fish knives.

When Jenkins is asked to locate his politics, he describes himself as an "enthusiastic Thatcherite," applauding her "iconoclasm" and finding her economic policies "wholly salutary." (Asked about the Rowland-Fayed squabble, he murmurs, "A plague on the whole bloody business," and judges Minister Ridley's nonintervention "quite right.") In other respects, he has reservations about Mrs. Thatcher—"I feel much more worrying is her appeal to basic instincts on social questions"—and on education Jenkins says he is

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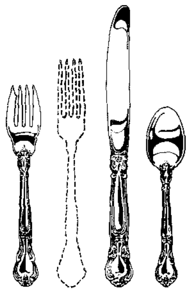

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"quite left-wing." He is also sophisticated or canny enough to know the dangers of a newspaper's being seen as a political camp follower. Cautiously declining to criticize his predecessors, he notes that "the *Times* has been too closely identified with the present incumbent of Downing Street"—a polite way of saying that for some years it has wagged its tail off, rolled delightedly on its back, and brought Mrs. Thatcher her slippers in the evening.

Jenkins' first influence has been to calm down the strident—some would say vulgar—design of the paper: smaller headlines, no stories in bold, no double rules, less boxing of items, and a "light basement" (i.e., a nonpolitical, human-interest story) on the news pages. There is still a long way to go in terms of substance: he needs to win back some of the good writers the *Times* has lost over the years, or, preferably, to discover their successors; he needs better feature coverage, friskier arts pages, solider news; he needs to reimpose accuracy and authority. He also knows that there is an inevitable time lag between such things' being established and their being spotted and relied upon by readers: for some time, dinner parties will continue to feature that impaling moment for Mr. Jenkins when the agreeable neighbor to his right congratulates him on his appointment and adds, smilingly, "But of course I read the *Independent*." Before his job is finished, there will need to be blood on the Axminster, and there can be little security in knowing that so far each of Murdoch's four editors seems to have been chosen for virtues that exactly contradict those of his immediate predecessor. Hearteningly, though, Jenkins is the first *Times* editor in recent years to be appointed with an evident brief to take the newspaper back upmarket. The office from which he seeks to do this is a small, windowless hutch in London's docklands—"the submarine captain's cabin," he calls it—whose walls are covered with ancestral portraits of previous editors. History breathes down his neck, and there is no contemporary view: skeptics might find these surroundings singularly appropriate for an editor of the *Times*. But for the moment even political and journalistic opponents are wishing Simon Jenkins well. You don't have to believe in feudalism to want the local castle to be in good repair.

—JULIAN BARNES

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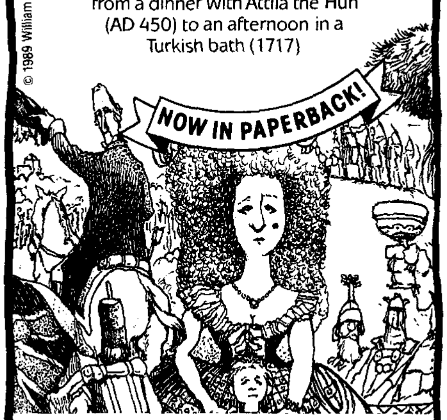

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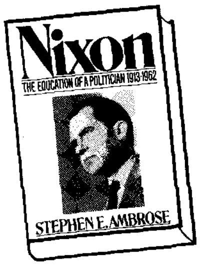

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Short and Simple Annals

IT seems patronizing to suggest now, as Thomas Gray did two and a half centuries ago, that many a gem of purest ray serene winks in the gloom of unexamined lives. Yet ordinary people retain their power to send forth surprise flashes, illuminating not only the dark around them but also more sophisticated shadows—for example, those cast by public figures who will not admit to private feelings, or by philosophers too profound to state a plain truth. Any newsman will tell you that if you wave your microphone in enough faces, sooner or later some guy in a John Deere cap is going to come out with words that glint and sparkle. Call them quartz if you like, but these scintillas brighten the imagery of our best writers. What was Raymond Carver's diamond prose but a carbonization of the garnet-rock of proletarian speech?

As with expression, so with experience. The largely unwritten "short and simple annals of the poor" (Gray again) help biographers distinguish between the little that is unique, the much that is mundane in the lives of men and women eminent enough to be chronicled. Your average salesman faces, on his daily battlefield, forces as epic as Leonidas at Thermopylae; yet if a James Joyce or an Arthur Miller can make literature out of him, might not he, granted some clarity of perception and a sympathetic editor, produce a page or two almost as fine?

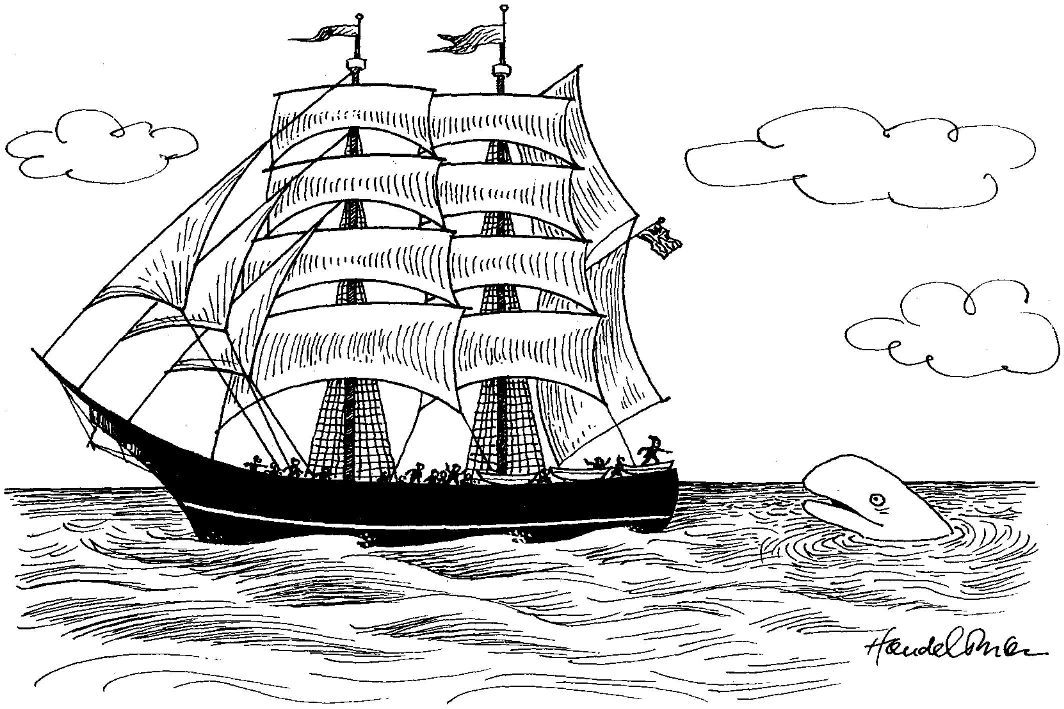
This, at any rate, was the notion of Hamilton Holt in 1902, when he commissioned a series of anonymous autobiographical sketches for his magazine *The Independent*. Such "lifelets," as he called them, fed a current fascination with the squalors of poverty, already exploited by Jacob Riis in "How the Other Half Lives" (1890). But Riis had been a highly sentimental writer; what distinguished Holt's pieces was their tone of hard authenticity. In most cases, his editing was minimal, and the voices that emerged from each installment were as vivid as the scratchings of an Edison cylinder. "The Story of a Polish Sweatshop Girl" was followed by "The Biography of a Bootblack," "The Story of a Young Syrian," "The Story of Two Moonshiners," and some seventy similar; in 1906, Holt collected the sixteen best and published them as "The Life Stories of Undistinguished Americans: As Told by Themselves."

It may be the enduring flintiness of these memoirs (some of them are bruising even by contemporary standards) that has encouraged Routledge to reissue them ($35 cloth; $12.95 paper) for the first time since their original publication, with four extra stories from the magazine series, and an introduction by Werner Sollors. More than half the collection consists of the accounts of immigrants, and the other pieces have a foxy hint of race (there are "Negro," Indian, and Filipino contributions) or the regional quirks of a culture unblended by television and radio. To see the Florida seabed through a Conch sponge fisherman's water glass is as rich and strange as to sit in a Lithuanian log house at the turn of the century and listen, with a boy's ears, to an old shoemaker reading subversive literature:

> "Some day," he said, "I will be caught and sent to jail, but I don't care. I got this from my son [in Chicago]. . . ." Then he bent over the paper a long time and his lips moved. At last he looked into the fire and fixed his hair, and then his voice was shaking and very low:
>
> "*We know these are true things—that all men are born free and equal—that God gives them rights which no man can take away—that among these rights are life, liberty and the getting of happiness.*"
>
> He stopped, I remember, and looked at me, and I was not breathing. He said it again, "*Life, liberty and the getting of happiness.* Oh, that is what you want."
>
> My mother began to cry.

If I may indulge a personal reminiscence, I once stood in the Jefferson Memorial in Washington and overheard a turbaned immigrant reading its inscriptions to his children. The words "God who gave us life gave us liberty," declaimed in a half-yodelling singsong, have never moved me as much before or since. Time and again in these "lifelets," images that are thrice familiar to Americans register upon us in the primitive way they first struck alien eyes and ears.

Needless to say, the Lithuanian boy eventually discovers that Jefferson promised not the "getting" of happiness but only its "pursuit." To a Hungarian peasant, the Statue of Liberty is merely a "big iron woman [with] a broom." Lincoln's notion of the superiority of labor feels, to a Japanese servant, more like



"No, I'm Moby Fred, but I'll be glad to take a message."

economic indignity: "no honor, no responsibility, no sense of duty, but the pliancy of servitude."

That last phrase is a scintilla, as are others in the servant's brokenly eloquent story: "a man of sunny side of age"; "reprimanded me with a red hot angry"; "my avocation as a professor of Dust and Ashes." And there is a passionate (if tacit) outburst worthy of Shylock:

> I said at heart, "It's your pleasure to blame me, lady. . . . You might bully me as you please and treat me like a dog, I shall not object. I have a soul within me. My vital energy in self-denying struggle could not be impaired by your despise. On the contrary, it will be stimulated."

Stimulation under stress is a feature of most of these narratives. All the subjects are, in their minor way, heroic, or at least heroically honest about themselves. They show little self-pity, and those who have managed to better themselves are not disposed to boast. All, with the exception of a rather passive ex-peon, share what the Japanese servant proudly admits to be "a hard spot," whether the hardness be ambition, fortitude, faith, or, in the case of a thirty-five-year-old Southern White Woman, racial hatred of frightening intensity. "I belong to a class in the South," she coolly proclaims, "who know the negro only as a servant." This economic status (she grew up on an inherited plantation) distinguishes her from the other memoirists in the book, who are uniformly poor; but her language is as direct as any. Acknowledging and explaining—without apology—her "well nigh uncontrollable" revulsion for black men, she is frank about the psychosexual attraction that drew her to black girls as a child:

> If we played "horse"—and I regret to say that we did—they were the horses, I the driver. . . . recall one young negro girl much stronger than the others, who, by getting down upon her hands and knees, could make herself such a vicious "horse" that none of us was able to stay on her back. But the effort to do so was an experience I ever coveted. I would seat myself firmly, clasp my hands tightly in the wool on the back of her head, and wait for the delicious sensation of feeling her take a running, plunging start that invariably landed me over her head somewhere in the grass. I was often severely bruised and obliged to retire to my mother for ointments.

The Southern Colored Woman whose story follows is equally direct about her phobia of white men. "Few colored girls reached the age of sixteen without receiving advances from them." She is tired of being propositioned by store clerks and school directors, of being fondled by white hands in a crowd. Her sense of victimization —"I never get used to it; it . . . hurts more and more"—dates back before puberty, to the wake of a beloved teacher, and the taunts of white children who saw her arrive with a bouquet: "More flowers for that dead nigger?" Flung stones pursued her as she ran home. "I have known real horrors since, but none left a greater impression on me."

Not surprisingly, reminiscences of childhood and youth are the most vivid parts of this book. It is impossible to read them, even when the prose is terse or ungainly, without feeling the raw texture of life. We kiss our girl goodbye in a field full of rising mist, while aching desire surges "to take hold of her and keep her." We try to fall asleep in a sifting shower of straw from other beds above our head. We plant, plow, shear, winnow, and grind. After a summer in the fields, it takes us two weeks to soften our hands for lacework. We card, spin, weave, sweep, and churn. We breathe the stink of drying sponges, taste black bread rubbed with garlic and herring, and stare into the round, red, wreathing face of a priest as he tells us our father is dead of "a broken heart" in New York.

Dead? No—there he is, striding through the woods of the St. Regis Reservation, a full-blooded medicine man, beaded and fringed, rattling with boxes of pills and herbs, while the streams choke with sawdust and "the ever encroaching white man" calls softly, promising us "glories and luxuries" in a government school far away. When we get there, we will be cropped and scrubbed, reclothed and renamed, forbidden to speak our native language.

What must we do to survive in this brutal New World? How to control machines that drive needles right through our fingers, too quick to see? Must we pay these police who block the way of our pushcart? Can we bear this whip that glues the shirt to our back? What do we say to overseers who strap our women to logs, like mules? Will we last a single night—God forbid thirteen years—in this high stockade, reeking with tallow and the oozings of men in chains? Shall we scalp these pale, pinched, overdressed

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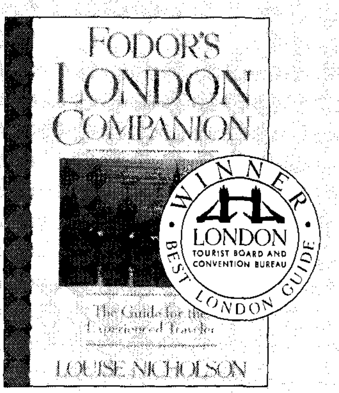
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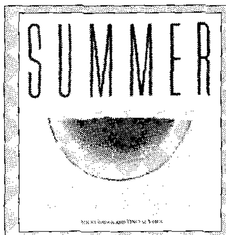

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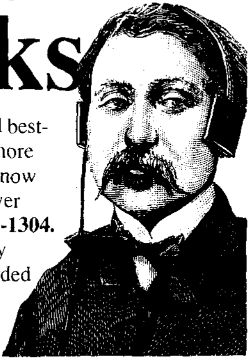

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people parading around us at Coney Island?

Well, there will be days when a few spare dollars accrue, and we can go to the theatre and have a good cry, or take a dance cruise up the Hudson, or wear a new gray dress with white insert, and a spray of roses, and receive the compliments of Newport gentlemen. The bars of Key West have barrels of *aguardiente* to take the salt out of our throat, there is good beer and vodka at Chicago's ethnic clubs, and—O rare treat after months at the ironing board! —soothing pipes of opium in certain parts of Chinatown. We might even (for have we not the soul of a poet?) express ourselves in verse:

> Concealing my own I toil and prepare
> Over the rough sea I steer my heart . . .

Or:

> Now, little papoose, swing on to your rest.
> My red browed papoose, swing east and swing west.

At least two "Life Stories of Undistinguished Americans" transcend the primitive and, by means of their grace and poignancy, qualify as lasting literature. The first is the account, by an Itinerant Minister, of his twenty-eight years on the Southern Methodist circuit. He was born with congenital cataracts, and endured three operations, without anesthetic, before his fourteenth birthday. Then, as he sat by a window one bright afternoon in May, a doctor managed to needle his right eye correctly, and "there burst upon my view such a vision of field and sky and sunlight as I had never looked upon before." In time, with the aid of microscope-thick lenses, he was able to use that eye to educate himself. What he read and pondered persuaded him that his vocation was the ministry. But his handicap was still so acute that it was four years before he could cajole the Methodist Conference to appoint him to an itinerary. So began a life of lonely trudges and buggy rides, often through snow and wind, to churches that may have had no more than two worshippers waiting for him. "The country was hilly and much broken; [I stayed] in very plain houses, often with only one room; my fare for days together . . . was only coarse corn bread, fat bacon, and coffee without cream or sugar—and not a church on the work had a stove, or was ceiled." His main solace for nine years was reading. Marriage in early middle age to "a sensible, religious country girl" brought family life, a parsonage swathed with morning glory, but ultimate tragedy: "The mother of my children sickened and died of rapid consumption."

Somehow he managed to find another wife. At the time of writing, he is serving his twentieth pastoral charge, still poor but debt-free. His sight is worsening, yet he is able to drive "over plain and familiar roads." He hopes, from his present patch of ground, to cull "a light bale of cotton." He estimates that he has preached to fifty thousand people in his life, and received a thousand new members into the church. His book collection is as big as he can afford it to be; he allows that he has tried his hand at a novel. Were he less blind, he might possibly have advanced farther, but he is too content to complain:

> The world in which I have lived has had more mysteries in it than the world of those who see well, and larger room for imagination, and for those poetic fancies which give the earth and sky and sun and stars a beauty that is not otherwise their own. And there have been other compensations. The very effort necessary to acquire the knowledge that I have gathered has made me husband it all the more carefully. I could not lightly throw away that which cost me so much.

The masterpiece of the collection is "The Life Story of a Farmer's Wife." Her prose, clear and flat as glass, achieves Orwell's ideal of representation without refraction. (Mr. Holt assures us that he has not changed a word.) She is utterly candid about herself and her domineering husband, whom she serves but does not love. "All through life I have found my dislike for giving offense to be my undoing." By nature dreamy, devout, and imaginative, she has to labor from four in the morning until nine at night on chores that gratify only her strong body. "I have never had a vacation, but if I should be allowed one I should certainly be pleased to spend it in an art gallery." She takes us through a typical day, noting in a matter-of-fact way that as soon as her first fire has caught in the kitchen she will go outside "and gather a choice, half-blown rose and a spray of bride's wreath, and arrange them in my hair." The superabundance of jobs that follow, listed without weariness or rancor, is enough to numb our comprehension. There are pails of milk to be strained, chickens and children to be fed, cattle "loudly pleading" to be taken to pasture, horses and hogs to care for, weeds to hoe, "dinner" to prepare before noon; then floors must be swept, gardens dug, seedlings transplanted, fences repaired . . . After a while, we begin to look ahead for relief. But we observe (as her husband surely does not) that halfway through the day she again puts fresh flowers in her hair. Also, she stands somewhat longer at the butter churn, perhaps, than most farmers' wives do, for there is a book guiltily propped beside it. She has always had a longing to read "the great poets and authors . . . but up till the present time I have not been permitted to satisfy this desire." Her father thought stories were sinful; her husband is "so very penurious" that he begrudges her subscription to a newspaper.

> I must admit that there is very little time for the higher life for myself, but my soul cries out for it, and my heart is not in my homely duties; they are done in a mechanical abstracted way . . . my ambitions are along other lines.

It comes as no surprise to learn that these ambitions are literary. Out of her own savings, and over her husband's vehement objections, she has bought ink and paper, and is taking a correspondence course in writing. She is proud of the fact that she has managed to get some articles printed, in papers "which do not pay for such matter." We doubt, somehow, that the papers gave her so much as a byline. Even now—published profitably, at last!—she must remain anonymous. We leave her churning, dreaming, the yellow slab dragging at her rod, garlanded for herself alone. As Gray elegiacally sighed:

Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

—EDMUND MORRIS

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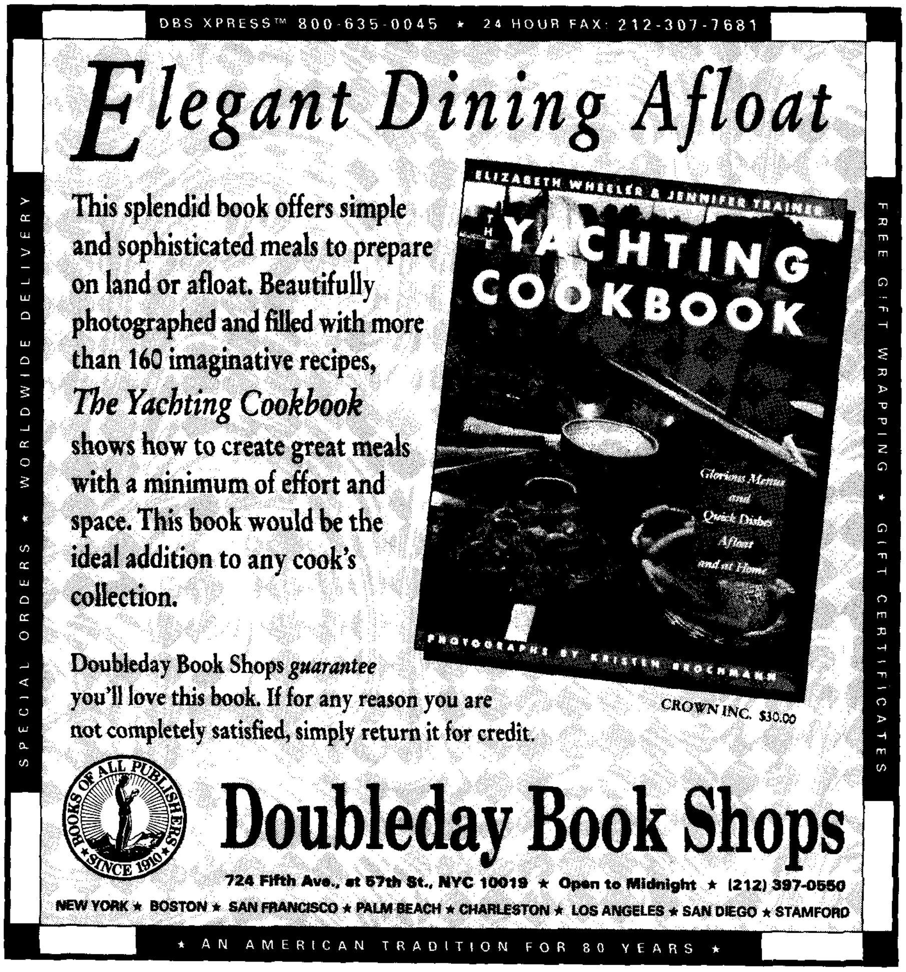
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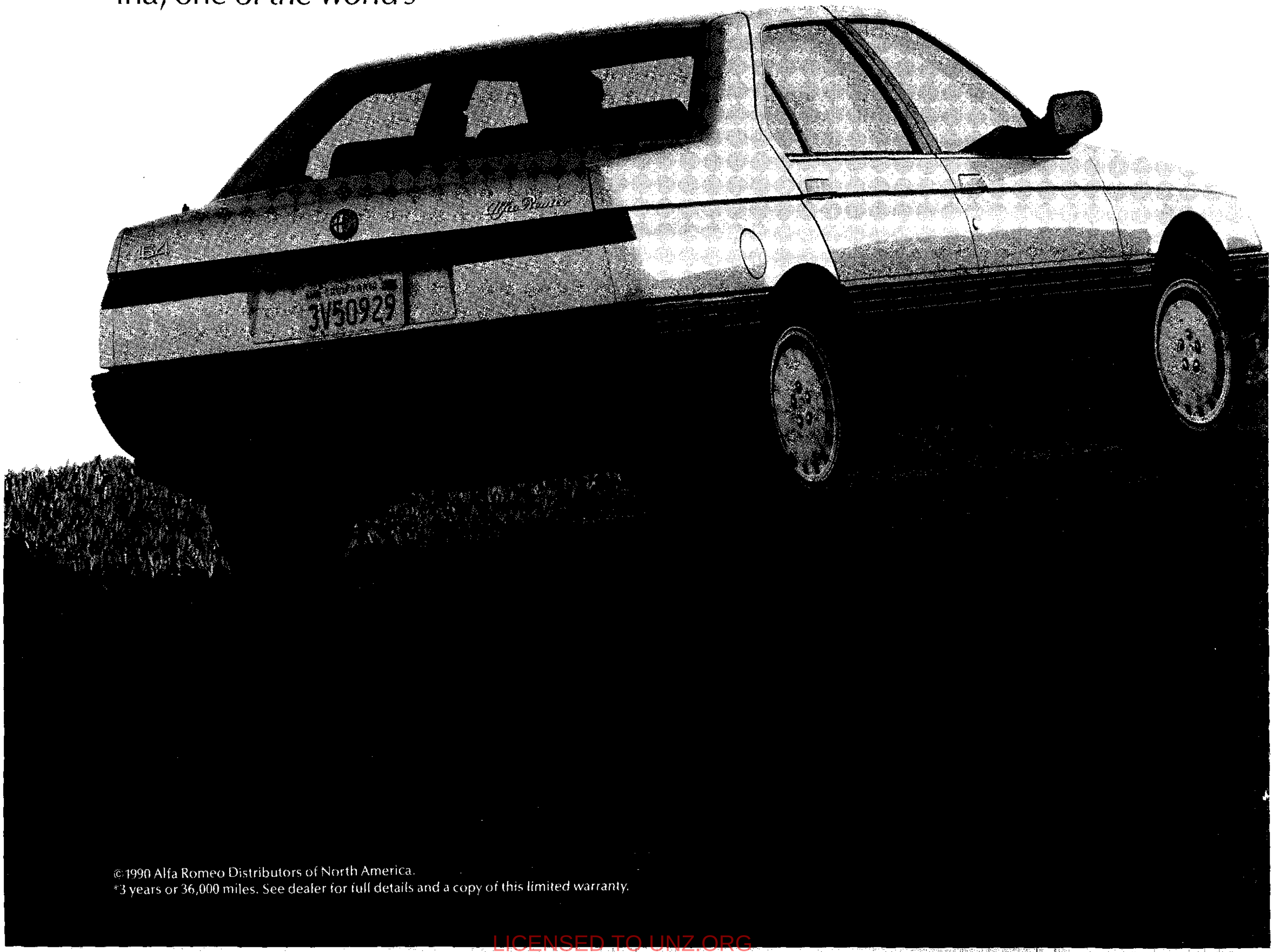

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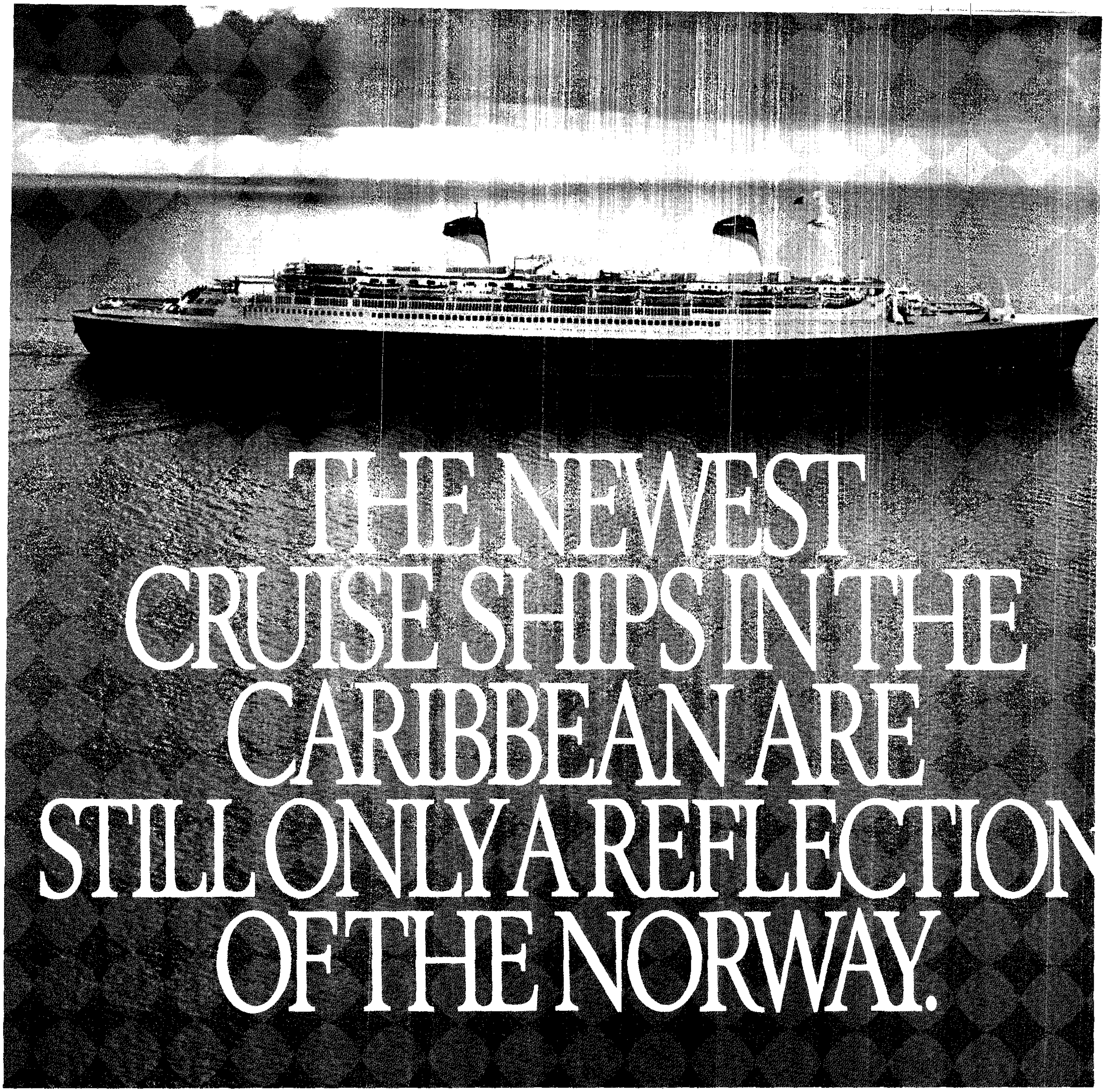

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